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To Robert

from his Father

on the day of his ordination

Dec 21st 1932

UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE TORONTO

# THE MYSTERY OF FAITH

BY

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PRIEST OF THE ORATORY

"Quod non capis, quod non vides
Animosa firmat fides,
Præter rerum ordinem."

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# CONTENTS

## PART I

### THE HOLY EUCHARIST IN THE SCRIPTURES


| | PAGE |
|---|---|
| 1. TESTIMONY OF THE WRITTEN WORD IN GENERAL | 3 |
| 2. MELCHISEDECH | 11 |
| 3. THE PASCHAL LAMB | 19 |
| 4. THE MANNA IN THE DESERT | 25 |
| 5. THE INSTITUTION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST | 34 |


## PART II

### THE HOLY EUCHARIST IN THE CHURCH


| | |
|---|---|
| 1. THE REAL PRESENCE | 45 |
| 2. THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS | 53 |
| 3. HOLY COMMUNION | 59 |
| 4. BENEDICTION | 65 |
| 5. VISITS TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT | 72 |


## PART III

### SOME THOUGHTS FOR EACH DAY DURING THE OCTAVE OF CORPUS CHRISTI


| | |
|---|---|
| 1. THURSDAY: THE FEAST OF CORPUS DOMINI | 83 |
| 2. FRIDAY: "HE LOVED THEM TO THE END" | 91 |
| 3. SATURDAY: "DO THIS FOR A COMMEMORATION OF ME" | 95 |

PAGE

4. SUNDAY: "HE THAT EATETH MY FLESH SHALL LIVE FOR EVER" - - - - 98
5. MONDAY: THE LIFE OF JESUS IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT—I. - - - - 104
6. TUESDAY: THE LIFE OF JESUS IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT—II. - - - - 110
7. WEDNESDAY: THE BLESSED SACRAMENT AND THE ASCENSION - - - - 118
8. THURSDAY: ST. PHILIP'S DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT - - - 124

PART IV

EUCHARISTIC ASPIRATIONS AND MEDITATIONS ON PSALM XLI

1. "AS THE HART PANTETH AFTER THE FOUNTAINS OF WATER" - - - - 133
2. "THESE THINGS I REMEMBERED, AND POURED OUT MY SOUL IN ME" - - - 141
3. "WITH THE VOICE OF JOY AND PRAISE" - 154

PART V

L'ENVOY - - - - - - 171

# INTRODUCTION

DEAR Reader, the Preacher says: "In the evening let not thy hand cease" (Eccles. xi. 6); and again: "Work your work before the time" (Ecclus. li. 38). The time of death is "the night in which no man can work" (John ix. 4); and then, and only then will there be an end of writing books (Eccles. xii. 12). Such work as is suitable to life's evening I still endeavour to perform, and accordingly have written this little book, to avoid idleness, but still more, to do something that may be of service, however small, to devout souls.

Therefore in the following pages are things that have been gathered from many learned and pious books on the Blessed Sacrament. There is very little that is exactly new, and much has been preached by me in past years before the arrival of this "time of silence," and I admit that there is no real necessity, and scarcely room for this booklet; yet not a few dear friends have urged me to have it printed,

and compliance with their sincere though indulgent desire will secure for my soul their much-needed prayers, and, kind Reader, obtain for me also yours, because I confess " I have spoken unwisely, and things that above measure exceeded my knowledge " (Job xlii. 3).

A few words may be permitted in explanation of the title chosen for this little Eucharistic Eulogy.

Commenting on St. Paul's words, " Holding the Mystery of faith in a pure conscience " (1 Tim. iii. 9), Estius says that Catharinus considers them to have reference to the Holy Eucharist, and to allude to the chalice of the Precious Blood which the deacons at Mass presented to the faithful. Hessels, on the same Epistle, shares the view of Catharinus. The words MYSTERIUM FIDEI are part of the Form of Consecration in the Missal; and this favours the opinion of Catharinus and Hessels, especially when we take into account the reasons for their presence in the Canon given by Pope Innocent III., Bona, Bellarmine, and others.

Innocent III. writes, in answer to John, Archbishop of Lyons: " Since the Evangelists do not testify that Christ said this (*Mysterium Fidei*), you are not a little disturbed, and wonder that anyone should try to maintain

that He said more than any of the Evangelists assert. But if you will diligently inspect the form of the Canon, besides this which you inquire about, you will find two other insertions in the Canon—viz., *Elevatis oculis in cœlum*, and *Æterni Testamenti*, which are not read in the text of the Gospel. Forsooth, we find many things omitted by the Evangelist about Our Lord's words and actions, which the Apostles are recorded to have supplemented in words or expressed in acts. . . . 'Credimus igitur quod formam verborum sicut in Canone reperitur et a Christo Apostoli et ab ipsis eorum acceperint successores'" (Lib. V., Epist. 121).

Bona shares this opinion of Innocent III.: "Hæc verba, *Mysterium Fidei* non sunt in Ordino Romano, sunt tamen in omnibus antiquissimis missalibus M.S.S. quos vidi" (*Rer. Liturgic.* Lib. II., Cap. XIII.).

Bellarmine, writing of Kemnitz and other Lutherans, says: "Fifthly, they falsely assert that the words *Novi et Æterni Testamenti* and *Mysterium Fidei* in the form of the consecration of the chalice are an addition, for in the Gospel it is only *Novi Testamenti*. I answer that, according to Tradition, St. Peter added them to the form: that they cannot be found fault with: that they are most true, and are gathered from the Scriptures. For the Testa-

ment of Christ *is* Eternal, and is thus distinguished from the Old Testament, which was temporary. Also, that it cannot be doubted that the chalice of Our Lord's Blood is rightly called the Mystery of Faith, since in no other thing is Faith more to be exercised and more frequently exercised than in this, where it is contradicted by all the senses."

Barradas (Tom. IV., Lib. IV., cap. 14) maintains that these very words were spoken by Christ, and were taught the Roman Church by St. Peter. For, says Barradas, if the words were not spoken by Christ, the Church would by no means have added them to the words of consecration which all are words of Christ. He quotes Salmeron in support of his view. He gives an account of the opinion of St. Thomas Aquinas, taken from P. III., Q. LXXVIII., Art. 3, *ad nonum.* There, in answer to the objection that no Evangelist gives these words, the Saint explains that the Evangelists did not intend to give the forms of the Sacraments, which in the primitive Church had to be concealed, as Dionysius mentions, but they intended to construct the history of Christ. And the added *Æterni* and *Mysterium Fidei* come from the tradition of the Lord, made known to the Church by the Apostles, as " I have received of the Lord, that

which also I delivered unto you " (1 Cor. xi. 23), and " Holding the Mystery of Faith " (1 Tim. iii. 9). Observe that St. Thomas also here sanctions the commentary application of St. Paul's words to the Holy Eucharist. Barradas does not seem to agree with the explanation of St. Thomas, which is not precisely his own, as we have seen above. But Scotus takes the Saint's view, and supports it with the same arguments as those of St. Thomas. From all this, I trust, dear Reader, you will grant that there is sufficient warrant for entitling this book The Mystery of Faith.

Our Blessed Lord has warned us of the great loss of Faith which will take place towards the end of the world, saying: " But yet the Son of man, when He cometh, shall He find, think you, faith on earth ?" (St. Luke xviii. 8). That which Christ foretold seems to be taking place. Already numbers refuse even to try to believe, and many who once believed have yielded to temptation and made shipwreck of their faith. Is it wise now to preach on the house-tops what once was heard in secret ? Is this the time to utter thoughts on the very Mystery which makes the most imperative demand upon our " Obedience to the faith "? (Rom. i. 5). I feel strongly that, in the presence of so many noisy assailants of all Revealed

Truth, we may thankfully listen to St. Jude and follow his instructions. "But you, my dearly beloved, be mindful of the words which have been spoken before by the Apostles of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, who told you that in the last time there should come mockers, walking according to their own desires in ungodliness. These are they, who separate themselves, sensual men, not having the Spirit. But you, my beloved, building yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord JESUS CHRIST unto life everlasting. And some indeed reprove, being judged: but others save, pulling them out of the fire. And on others have mercy, in fear, hating always the spotted garment which is carnal" (vv. 17-23).

With ourselves, then, in these days, which may be "in the last time," are some we are to reprove, others we are to save, others we are to have mercy on in fear: and, to carry out the injunctions of St. Jude, we are to fit ourselves for the task by building ourselves upon our most holy faith. It may therefore be useful to make a few preliminary remarks upon this virtue, always remembering that "without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb. xi. 6).

As charity is called the gift of the Holy Ghost, so may faith be called the gift of the Word Incarnate: for " faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ " (Rom. x. 17). St. Paul says that Christ " rose again for our justification " (Rom. iv. 25), and writes to the Galatians that we are " justified by the faith of Christ " (ii. 16). But it is well to bear in mind the manner, the gentle, gradual manner, in which Christ gave His gift of faith. The Sun of Justice rose from His Sepulchre, but not in dazzling effulgence, exulting like a giant to run His course. Faith has her mantle of obscurity, and in the Resurrection the soft, silver clouds of this heavenly raiment were not dispelled at once by the glory of the Risen Conqueror. He would not show Himself at once and in the fulness of His glory. Therefore, first was found the empty Tomb, then Angels saying: He is risen; then messages delivered by Magdalen and the other Maries; then instructions, which made their hearts burn within them, to the disciples on the road to Emmaus; then actual manifestations of Himself, accompanied, however, with expostulating reproaches. Reason enough; for, as St. Mark narrates: " Mary Magdalen went and told them that had been with Him, who were mourning and weeping. And they hearing that

He was alive, and had been seen by her, *did not believe.* And after that He appeared in another shape to two of them walking, as they were going into the country. And they going told it to the rest: neither did they believe them. At length He appeared to the Eleven as they were at table: and He upbraided them with their incredulity and hardness of heart, because they did not believe them who had seen Him after He was risen again" (Mark xvi.). They, as well as St. Thomas, by this want of faith have helped all others to believe. St. Matthew writes: "And the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where JESUS had appointed them. And seeing Him they adored: but some doubted" (Matt. xxviii. 17). We may hope that their disposition was similar to his who said to Our Saviour, in great humility and not a little faith: "Lord, I believe: help Thou my unbelief!" (Mark ix. 23). All these passages tend to prove that sight assists, but does not necessitate faith. Moreover, we have the teaching of Our Lord to the same effect: "Blessed are they that have not seen and have believed" (John xx. 29).

Science imparts knowledge in which is great certitude—a certitude gained by demonstration and deduction; but science has to acknowledge that further investigations and new dis-

coveries may come to correct the most confident assertions of the professors in her school. The knowledge bestowed by faith has its certainty from authority, a higher certainty because it rests on an authority which is Divine. God Himself is the Object of Faith; and our acts of faith are made because of the Divine authority of Him who is essentially and infinitely Wise and True. The light of Faith is not the *cause* of our having faith, nor is any miracle—though there is help in the works and wonders of God which we behold—nor is anything created: God Himself is the "Author and Finisher of faith" (Heb. xii. 2).

A condition, which is not necessary for scientific knowledge, is absolutely necessary for the knowledge we have by faith. It must arise in the heart before it reaches the head. There are many things that an unwilling man can be made to do; but, unless a man wants to believe, and wills to believe, he cannot be *forced* to believe. Conviction may come from study, but conviction is not faith. The temptations of the Evil One, the pride and curiosity of our perverse nature, are the chief causes of painful perplexities and culpable doubts about the Holy Eucharist; and the sure and infallible remedy is humble prayer. May such prayer, dear Reader, accompany your perusal of these

pages—prayer that springs to the lips when the love and the generosity of the Sacred Heart discovered in the Mystery of Faith enkindle burning love in our own hearts. Let the prayer be the childlike prayer that "perfects praise." The Saviour has said: "I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones" (Luke x. 21).

# PART I

## THE HOLY EUCHARIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

1. TESTIMONY OF THE WRITTEN WORD IN GENERAL.
2. MELCHISEDECH.
3. THE PASCHAL LAMB.
4. THE MANNA IN THE DESERT.
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# THE MYSTERY OF FAITH

## THE HOLY EUCHARIST IN THE SCRIPTURES

### Testimony of the Written Word in General.

The purpose of discussing what the Scriptures teach us about the Holy Eucharist cannot but awaken within us feelings of weakness, unworthiness, and reverential fear. It is the Word of God that is contained in the Blessed Sacrament and in the Holy Bible. A cautious, humble wisdom and a courageous love are needed to treat worthily of mysteries so deep and hidden, and unless obedience enjoined the task there would almost be presumption in undertaking it. Even love that casts out fear is not considered strong enough to embolden preachers to deliver sermons in the visible presence of the Blessed Sacrament, and therefore in times of Exposition, when we speak of Our Lord before Himself, the Monstrance on the altar is veiled with reverent cere-

mony.[1] In like manner the Bible, the Written Word, receives from us its due ceremonial respect, our sincere and heartfelt reverence. The first guardians of the Testament were most careful to treat the Copies of the Law with profound religious respect. In their synagogues they veiled the reader as a token of unworthiness, even as now we cover with a veil the hands of the priest who gives Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. But, when announcing the Gospel of the New Testament, the Church far surpasses the Synagogue in signs of reverence. A procession is formed, lights and incense are used, the deacon kneels and prays that God, even as He cleansed the lips of the prophet with burning coal, will cleanse his heart and lips, so that he may worthily and rightly announce the Gospel: on bended knees he receives the celebrant's blessing to this end: the people stand in silent reverence to listen: and afterwards the celebrant kisses the sacred Text, as a sign of faith, submission, and gratitude. Thus Catholics and Jews show reverence to the Scriptures; but their example is thrown away on too many Protestants, who "insist on making God their servant or their equal,"

[1] Our St. Philip, however, was allowed, although a lay-man, to preach again and again before the B. Sacrament during Quarant Ore.

and treat His Word with profane familiarity which is disgusting, or with irreverent levity which is blasphemous ; who " wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction " (2 Pet. iii. 16), till in these last days we have " deceitful scoffers " (2 Pet. iii. 3), who scornfully deny the Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures.

Before, in all reverence and docility, attempting to search the Scriptures for their testimony concerning the Blessed Sacrament, it may be well to remind ourselves that throughout the Bible there is a double sense attached to very many sentences, though not to all. This constitutes the mystery, the beauty—also the danger—of the Scriptures; this makes it necessary that there should be an authoritative explanation of their meaning. As the Prophet was warned, this Sacred Scroll is " written within and without " (Ezech. iii. 10). It has, St. Gregory explains, a literal and an allegorical sense; its spiritual meanings have to be interpreted. " To the fathers by the prophets God spoke in divers manners " (Heb. i. 1). Therefore we find the Old Testament rich in figures, and types, and spiritual significations. This is easily accounted for. God speaks according to the capacity of His hearers, and therefore by signs and symbols—pictures if

you will, even as we teach children. The figures and types of the Old Testament are succeeded by the parables of the New; God thus still accommodating Himself to the feebleness of His creatures.

Then also we should not forget that sometimes in just anger God employs the same method: "Therefore do I speak to them in parables: because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand" (Matt. xiii. 13). The proud, the learned and wise in their own conceit, the curious, are perplexed and bewildered by the mysteriousness and arbitrariness of the figurative language and symbolical actions. However, in certain cases, all can easily understand that the veiled language of the prophet is designed to avert from him the vengeance of the wicked who would have promptly slain him had they at once interpreted the real meaning of his bold but obscure reprimands.

In imitation of their Divine Master, the Apostles frequently indicate the spiritual sense of the Old Testament to confirm their teaching. Thus, in Hebrews, St. Paul applies to Christ the promise literally made to David in favour of Solomon: "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son" (2 Kings vii. 14). And St. John applies to the Lamb of God upon

the Cross words literally meant for the Paschal lamb: "*You shall not break a bone of him.*" St. Peter declares that those who were saved from the Deluge by the Ark were a type of the salvation by the Church: "Whereunto baptism being of the like form now saveth you also" (1 Pet. iii. 20).

The carnally-minded Jew clung pertinaciously to the literal sense of the Old Testament, yet preserved faithfully all its records of figure, type, and prophecy, though they told against himself. He loved Moses, although Moses had predicted that God would reject his nation and call others in its place. The hostile Jew thus preserves a testimony which is of priceless value to Christians. The Jew would not look for nor accept the spiritual sense of Scripture; and therefore, when Christ came with a kingdom of grace, with lessons of meekness and holiness, with a Cross instead of a conqueror's banner, His people rejected Him. Cæsar was preferred to the King they impiously crowned with thorns!

St. Paul clearly explains and inculcates this doctrine. "All these things happened to them in figure, and they are written for our correction" (1 Cor. x. 11). "Which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is Christ's" (Col. ii. 17). To his own father Isaac was a

type or figure: " He received him as a parable " (Heb. xi. 19). " For the law having a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things " (Heb. x. 1). Coming events, we habitually say, cast their shadow before them. Thus all the great events in the history of the Chosen People were typical in character. They had a literal meaning and fulfilment worthy of God and His especial providence for that people: but a higher, holier meaning was also there. The legal ceremonies were " patterns of heavenly things," " patterns of the true " (Heb. ix.), and these were to be imaged forth more plainly when Christ the Body or Substance came. It may be added that the coming of Our Lord did not put an end to the use of type and symbol. He confirmed many spiritual lessons by His own parables; many events were made yet more significant when supplemented by His own symbolical action, and the legal rites and ceremonies gave place to His own New Rite and Sacraments—*Et antiquum documentum Novo cedat Ritui.* The Sun of Justice is risen, and shines resplendently, yet the shadows of earth are not entirely removed. The perfect, which will make void everything imperfect, will be found only in the brightness and clearness of His Beatific Vision, when nature and grace will be

absorbed in glory. Meanwhile, in reading the Scriptures, we cannot but notice that the Almighty seems to have delighted in frequent, gracious renewals of promises which, once made, could not fail, and to have delighted in multiplying types and figures of the good things to come.

And now it is time to state that the chief and most beautiful of the Old Testament types relate to the Blessed Sacrament. And for two principal reasons was the Holy Eucharist especially prefigured. Firstly, because of its dignity. It is the Greatest Gift of God. All that is holy and venerable in the Church clusters around the Blessed Sacrament, even as the plants and flowers of Paradise surrounded the central Tree of Life. Therefore would God have it foretold, looked forward to by the elect; therefore were figures multiplied to spread its renown, to enkindle the desires of souls for this Living Bread. We are not surprised to learn that at the time of Our Lord the Jews, in consequence of these Divine intimations, were expecting the Messias to bestow upon them some heavenly Food far surpassing in sweetness the Manna of the Desert. They hoped it would be the fruit of the Tree of Life.

Secondly, the Holy Eucharist is prefigured and foreshadowed in the Scriptures because of

its mystery, its supernaturalness, and human impossibility. With God all things are possible; it is as easy to Him to do His least or greatest work as it is to leave that work undone. It is with us that the difficulty lies; to us, of all mysteries this is the most mysterious, because of the thinness of the veil which conceals a Substance so stupendous, and because of the marvellous relations with our God into which we enter when we receive Holy Communion. To lead man from the gloom of night into the light of day, to bring him from darkness into the dazzling daylight, the Word of God—of Him whose wisdom "ordereth all things mightily and sweetly" (Wisd. viii. 1)—in Divine gentleness, gradually guides man from shadow to shadow into the reality of this glorious truth, lest he be blinded by the almost intolerable majesty and power of that word of the Creator and Redeemer: "THIS IS MY BODY." Thus, if we, in all obedience and reverence, search the Scriptures, we shall find that they give unmistakable consoling testimony to the Holy Eucharist in the types of the Old Testament, in the Psalms, in the Gospels, and even in the Apocalypse itself. May the Written Word "open our eyes," and help us to know JESUS "in the breaking of Bread" (Luke xxiv. 30)!

## MELCHISEDECH.

When Our Lord deigns to explain His own parable, as He did that of the Sower, we have only to repeat His words, and bless Him for having spoken them. And when the Holy Ghost explains one part of Sacred Scripture by another part, commentators may well be content to refrain from further investigation. Wherefore, in considering the first Scripture type of our great High-Priest, we have but to repeat what is meaningly taught us about Melchisedech. In his Epistle to the Hebrews, St. Paul writes inspired words concerning the going forth of Melchisedech with bread and wine to meet Abraham, to bless Abraham, and to receive the tithes of Abraham. We should be grateful to the Apostle for his cautious words when he mentions Melchisedech: "Of whom we have much to say, and hard to be intelligibly uttered, because you are become weak to hear" (Heb. v. 11). Indeed, so mysterious and difficult to understand are the words of Scripture about Melchisedech that in the early Church men were led astray, "wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction," they held that he was the Holy Ghost, the Son of God, or some great Angel; and, clinging to such errors, they separated them-

selves into an Agnostic sect called the Melchisedechians.

The Bible mentions Melchisedech in three places. The fourteenth chapter of Genesis gives him a place of striking prominence in the world's early history. Melchisedech was the King of Salem, or Sichem. He was also the priest of the Most High God, being the Guardian of Mount Garizim. Melchisedech descended to the plain to greet Abraham returning triumphantly from Dan, after vanquishing Chodorlahomor, and rescuing his nephew Lot in the king's vale. The scene has been depicted again and again by Biblical artists. The royal Priest offers his sacrifice of bread and wine, he blesses the Patriarch, and receives from Abraham his prophetic offering of tithes.

Next, David names Melchisedech in Psalm cix.: "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech." This Psalm was to be sung in the Temple of Jerusalem, where alone might sacrifice be offered, and by priests of the order of Aaron. Yet it is Melchisedech's, not Aaron's, order which is to be ennobled by Christ; His priesthood shall not be that established at Jerusalem, but shall be according to the primitive priesthood exercised, as recorded,

on Garizim in Samaria. In Hebrews (chapter viii.) St. Paul uses what was foreshadowed in Genesis and prophesied in David's psalm, and with overwhelming authority applies all to JESUS CHRIST.

It may be well to describe what is the office of a priest, before considering the similitude which St. Paul establishes in the priesthood of CHRIST and Melchisedech. The knowledge of the existence of our Divine Creator imposes upon mankind the duty of maintaining practices of religious worship such as must have been instituted by the first human inhabitants of this earth. Religion, then, necessitates ceremonial rites, sacrifice, and priests. From the beginning of the human race, religion and the priesthood have coexisted; the Law of Nature seems to have ordained everywhere that the worship of God should be accomplished by sacrifice.[1] Sacrifice is the solemn external offering to God of some sensible thing or victim by a deputed and authorized minister on behalf of the commonwealth, in acknowledgment of the Divine Dominion over life and death. The priest must be not self-appointed, but

[1] According to Gerbet and the *Dictionnaire des Religions* which quotes him, Adam was instructed by God, through unrecorded revelations, to offer sacrifice as the most appropriate form of supreme worship.

" called by God " (Heb. v. 4). It would appear that under the Law of Nature, God left this appointment to each tribe or commonwealth, and so every nation would naturally consider its chief or head fittest for the office. Thus, from Noe till the vocation of Aaron, every first-born was by birthright the priest of his family; and in accordance with this custom, the Lord commanded that the Paschal Lamb should be sacrificed in Egypt by the head of each household (Exod. xii. 3). Therefore we find the same man both king and priest, like Melchisedech—patriarch and priest, like Abraham. Under the law of Moses, the priesthood was reserved and limited to the descendants of Aaron, and the diaconate to the tribe of Levi; and " many priests were made because by reason of death they were not suffered to continue " (Heb. vii. 23). But now, under the law of Grace, there is only One Priest, King and Pontiff, the Head and Chief, as well as the High-Priest, of the Kingdom of Grace. To JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS, the Lord has sworn: " Thou art a Priest for ever." " This, for that He continueth for ever, hath an everlasting priesthood " (Heb. vii. 24). To the end of the world His religion will last. " Of His Kingdom there shall be no end," and His Sacrifice will be ever offered to the Most

High. He Himself offers it, and the Victim is Himself. As for the priests who serve His altar: "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. iv. 1). The Sacrifice is His, not ours. Were it ours, we should offer it to Him. But who ever thought of offering sacrifice to CHRIST? We are His ministers, consecrating only in His Name, by His authority, with His Omnipotence, and He by us offers His Perpetual Sacrifice to God.

Our Blessed Saviour is our only High-Priest. This is of faith. On the altar and on the Cross He offers Sacrifice: on the altar perpetually, on the Cross once. And be it noted that He immolated Himself on the altar "the day before he suffered," before He offered Himself on the Cross. With desire, with exultation, He showed His loving voluntary acceptance of the office to which He was appointed, for which He was anointed by the Lord, who swore and will not repent, by thus becoming the Victim of the Mass before He was crucified as the Victim of Calvary. Mass and Crucifixion are His one and the same Sacrifice for the remission of sins accomplished freely by our High-Priest, whose love is stronger than death. Martyrs sacrifice their lives to God, but they are not thereby God's priests, because they are not in so dying

deputed by others to offer themselves as victims to God. Nor would their offering, however excellent, avail for atonement; whereas the offering made by CHRIST is of infinite merit. He, and He alone, is our Mediator, our Royal High-Priest, full of compassion—our Advocate, our Paraclete, " always living to make intercession for us " (Heb. vii. 25). It is as our Priest that He died for our sins, reconciling us to God; as our Priest He offers the Sacrifice of His Body throughout the world till its consummation; as our Priest He intercedes for us at the right hand of the Father, with the Five Sacred Wounds, those glorious tokens of endless love, those tender Memorials of infinite mercy.

The following are the chief points of resemblance indicated by St. Paul to prove that Melchisedech is a Type of CHRIST:

1. In his name, which is interpreted King of Justice.

2. In his office and royal state, King of Salem, or King of Peace.

3. In that he is without father or mother, from whom his dignity of priesthood is inherited.

4. In that he is " without genealogy," *i.e.*, descendants.

5. Without beginning of days or end of life, *i.e.* eternal.

6. In being both priest and king, which Aaron was not.

7. In that he blessed Abraham, the greater blessed the inferior.

8. In being likened to the Son of God, being a Priest for ever—*i.e.*, having no successor—because He "hath an everlasting priesthood." Through CHRIST, and through His priestly power alone, can the prophecy be fulfilled. "From the rising of the sun even to the going down, My Name is great among the Gentiles; and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My Name a clean oblation" (Malach. i. 11). This Sacrifice is to be made in worship of God, not that made on Calvary—*that was for once.* This is to be "a clean Oblation," the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

9. Lastly, resemblance is established by the order or ritual of the Sacrifices, in the bread and wine offered by Melchisedech and the Bread and Wine Transubstantiated and then offered by CHRIST. Melchisedech slew no victims. "Bringing forth bread and wine, for he was the priest of the Most High God" (Gen. xiv. 18), he celebrated in thanksgiving for the victory of Abraham. Our own High-Priest chooses the same substances for His Clean Oblation, and changes them into the adorable Substance of His own Body and Blood, which

He offers to His Father and gives through His ministers to His Church under the appearance of what constitutes man's primary and sufficient food. And yet, though in outward form so like, how faint a shadow of the Sacrifice of CHRIST is that of Melchisedech! The destruction of the bread and wine in the Vale of the Kings gives but the faintest foreshadowing or prefiguring of the almighty act of twofold Consecration whereby our Eternal Priest mystically immolates the Divine Victim in the symbolical separation of His Body and Blood. The words of Consecration indicate the meaning of what is done in this stupendous Mystery of Faith. Be it also remembered that nothing better represents the Mystical Body of which CHRIST is Head and Priest than bread: for as one bread is made out of many grains, so is His Church one Body made out of many nations. And, again, nothing better represents life—life to be mystically immolated in the Sacrifice—than blood "because the life of the flesh is in the blood" (Lev. xvii. 11). Therefore the Blood in the chalice "shall be shed for many unto the remission of sin" (Luke xxvi. 28).

Priestly power remains CHRIST'S for ever, though its exercise upon this earth will cease on the Judgment Day. Beneath that old Sanctuary of Sichem, seated at Jacob's Well,

Our Lord announced: "You shall neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem adore the Father. God is a spirit, and they that adore Him must adore in spirit and in truth" (John iv. 24). Throughout the whole wide world His Sacrifice will be offered in spirit and in truth till the consummation of the world. The effects of that Sacrifice are eternal as His Priesthood, the salvation of the Blessed abides for ever. The benefit of that Sacrifice is enjoyed eternally by the Saints who adore "Him that liveth for ever and ever" (Apoc. v. 14). As He, being their Priest, on earth wept for their sins and soothed their sorrows with tender compassion, so will He in Heaven with His presence and sight consummate their bliss; and they who by His Priesthood were brought to the Most High, will in Him, their Forerunner, obtain everlasting rest.

## The Paschal Lamb.

St. Paul has shown us that in Melchisedech we have the type of our High-Priest Jesus Christ; the same Apostle tells us what is the Scripture type of His Sacrifice. He directs us to Exodus. He bids us see there, in the sacrifice or feast of the Paschal Lamb, a type of our Saviour's Sacrifice. "Christ our Pasch is

sacrificed; let us feast therefore, not with the old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and iniquity, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth " (1 Cor. v. 8). Our commentators on this text all consider the rite of the Paschal Lamb to be the most significant type of the Holy Eucharist that continues and commemorates in the Mass the Paschal Crucifixion of the Lamb of God. To St. Paul's Corinthians this likeness would especially appeal, as this sacrifice of the Passover was the very first of those offered to God according to the Divine instructions given to Moses. Jews would not regard as of equal significance the same victim offered under the law of nature by the innocent Abel, whose lamb is so pathetic a picture of our Innocent Lamb of God according to the Church's liturgy of the Mass. It was St. John Baptist who first gave to JESUS the beautiful name of the Lamb of God. St. John the Evangelist had it in mind when, like St. Paul, he referred to Exodus: " These things were done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, ' *You shall not break a bone of Him* ' " (John xix. 36). St. Peter, too, writes to the Faithful that they were redeemed: " with the precious Blood of Christ, as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled " (1 Pet. i. 19). His brother, St. Andrew, that gentlest and dearest of Apostles, said to the

tyrant who persecuted him: "I do sacrifice every day to the Almighty God, Who is One and True, not the flesh of oxen nor the blood of goats, but the Spotless Lamb upon the altar, whose Flesh all the people who believe eat, while the Lamb Who is sacrificed remains whole and living." Both on the Cross and on the altar CHRIST is likened to the Paschal lamb. That lamb was led to sacrifice garlanded with flowers, but JESUS went to Calvary with a crown of thorns. "He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before his shearer, and He shall not open His mouth" (Isa. liii. 7).

On the tenth day of Nisan, the Spring month of the Jewish year, the first and most sacred, each family was to procure a lamb, one without blemish, and one year old. On the fourteenth day at evening the lamb was to be slain. Its blood was to be placed apart, the flesh was to be roasted; nothing was to be eaten raw; nor was any portion to be boiled. The whole was to be consumed. Whatever was left was to be burnt. It was to be eaten with haste, with bitter herbs and wild lettuce. They were to have their loins girt, their sandals on their feet, staves in their hands. No stranger or uncircumcised person was to partake. It was to be eaten in one house, and

nothing was to be taken elsewhere, nor was a bone to be broken. And all this, because it was the Phase or the Passage of the Lord through the houses of Egypt, searching out and slaying the first-born of the uncircumcised.

Our Blessed Lord observed every legal rite in keeping the Pasch. In the Spring, when the lambs with their flowery garlands were brought into Jerusalem, He entered the city over the palm-branches strewed on His triumphal way. On the fourteenth day, after having for the last time complied with the law, He immolated Himself. "With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you before I suffer." For their sake and for ours did He immolate Himself: "For them do I sanctify Myself" (John xvii. 19). That word *sanctify*, is applied to the Peace-Offering. Saying: "Take and eat, THIS IS MY BODY," He, the True Pasch, in the unleavened, consecrated Bread, dumb as a lamb and mystically dead, gave Himself to be eaten. The fire was to be the ardent love of their hearts. The bitter herbs and wild lettuce represent the Sacrament of Penance, which usually precedes Communion. Nothing raw—*i.e.*, no tepid soul; nothing boiled—*i.e.*, no artful, curious, worldly wisdom—is tolerated. "He that is a searcher of majesty shall be overwhelmed by glory" (Prov. xxv. 27). What

they could not consume they were to burn: what we cannot comprehend we must worship with fires of divine love within our hearts. "THIS IS THE CHALICE, THE NEW TESTAMENT IN MY BLOOD, WHICH SHALL BE SHED FOR YOU" (Luke xxii. 20). Yes, for there is ever a Passage of the Lord, and the Blood of the Lamb is ever needed. The Precious Blood in the chalice appeases Him, and for the sake of her Eucharistic Sacrifice God spares the children of the Church.

The Paschal Lamb was the thank-offering of the Israelites for their escape from the death of the first-born in the land of Egypt. It was most acceptable to God, as indeed, is all gratitude. Therefore nothing was to be left: If there were not sufficient numbers in a family, let the neighbours be brought in; because this sharing of the whole victim amongst those who offered was symbolical of the Divine benevolence and complete acceptance. It was as if the Lord also smelled a sweet odour, to use the Scriptural language, and feasted on the victim which typified His own Son in whom He was well-pleased: even as when, represented by the Three Angels, He partook of similar symbolical food, the kid and cakes of unleavened bread, beneath Abraham's oak in the Vale of Mambre.

Lastly, let the instruction given in Exodus (xii. 43) be also noted: "No foreigner shall eat

of it." "Are not they that eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?" (1 Cor. x. 18). God's altar is called "the table of the Lord" by St. Paul, as though in amity He seated us beside Him, calling us not servants but friends, and admitting us to the Sacred Banquet of Holy Communion. "The stranger and the hireling shall not eat thereof" (Exod.). Only the members of the Church have a right to her Sacraments; and the words of St. Jerome to Pope St. Damasus may be recalled: "He that eateth the Paschal Lamb out of thy house is profane." We thankfully believe that certain non-Catholics have recognized the sinful profanity of imposing on the ecclesiastical authorities abroad, and daring to place themselves amongst Catholic Communicants in Catholic churches. We believe that this unworthy conduct has been stopped; and therefore we may more peacefully pray that St. Jerome's further monition may be heeded, and that our separated brethren[1] will desist from attempts to say

[1] The Articles of the Established Church of England renounce the Sacrifice of the Mass; the members of that Established Church are thereby put out of the law of Nature, the law of Moses, the law of Grace—all of which enjoin sacrifice. They neither fulfil prophecy, nor worship God aright. Judgment and the "anger of the Lamb" is what they are threatened with.

Mass and administer Sacraments, which it is *profanity* to do except in communion with, and obedience to, the Vicar of Christ.

### The Manna in the Desert.

The setting forth from Egypt into the desert under the leadership of Moses was performed with a good will by the Israelites. They were filled with the joy of their escape from the house of bondage; they were exultant at the destruction before their eyes of the hosts of Pharaoh. The sense of freedom made them relish the unleavened bread which in their hurried departure they had brought away slung across the shoulder. But three days' marching without water, and then to find water that was bitter and undrinkable tried their constancy, and gave rise to murmurs. The miraculous healing of the waters of Mara restored confidence, and nothing could be more peaceful than the encampment at Elim, round its twelve fountains in the shelter of its seventy palms. But on leaving Elim they entered the Sinaitic desert, and soon the slender stock of provisions was exhausted. They reached Raphidim, where there was no water, and discontent became universal, reproaches loud. "Why didst thou make us go forth out of Egypt, to kill us and

our children and our beasts with thirst?" (Exod. xvii. 3). "Why have you brought us into this desert: that you might destroy all the multitude with famine?" (Exod. xvi.). God heard their murmuring. It was wicked, but they were still new to His ways, and this time He excused them, and He said to Moses: "Behold I will rain bread from Heaven for you." Moses and Aaron said to the children of Israel: "In the evening you shall know that the Lord hath brought you forth out of the land of Egypt: and in the morning you shall see the glory of the Lord. . . . So it came to pass in the evening that quails coming up covered the camp: and in the morning a dew lay round about the camp. And when it had covered the face of the earth, it appeared small, and as it were beaten with a pestle, like unto the hoar-frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said to one another: Manhu! which signifieth: What is this! for they knew not what it was. And Moses said to them: This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat." The Psalmist sings: "They spoke ill of God: they said: Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? . . . And He had commanded the clouds from above, and had opened the doors of heaven, and had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had

given them the bread of heaven" (Ps. lxxvii.). "Now the manna was like coriander-seed, of the colour of bdellium" (Num. xi. 7). In colour and shape and hardness it was like small pearls. They were to gather it before sunrise, and to crush it with a pestle, and so knead it into cakes. It had a natural taste of fine flour, honey, and oil, and it had besides a supernatural property of tasting like the food each one might wish for. This supernatural deliciousness was, however, only perceived by the good. The wicked tasted only its ordinary flavour, for they continued often to long after the flesh-pots of Egypt, saying: "Our soul is dry, our eyes behold nothing else but manna." They could hardly have complained of sameness, if they had enjoyed its varied qualities.

These three rules were given to the people to guide them in gathering the manna: (1) Each was to collect the same quantity as others: all were to have the same measure. If they attempted to collect more, they found it gone when they reached the camp. (2) It was to be gathered fresh each morning, and was to be a daily bread to them. If they tried to keep it, they found that it had become useless and putrid. (3) It was not to be collected on the Sabbath, but a double quantity on the morn-

ing before. If they went out for it on the Sabbath, they found none upon the ground.

During the forty years of their wandering in the desert, morning after morning, this bread never failed. We read in the Book of Josue that, when they entered the Promised Land, " the manna ceased after they ate of the corn of the land " (v. 12).

Now, this Manna is the universally accepted Type of the Blessed Sacrament. According to the traditions and expectations of the Jews, as testified by many Rabbinical writers, Messias was to give a bread from Heaven far more wonderful than that of Moses. In this they were believing the Prophets. " They shall be converted that sit under His shadow; they shall live upon wheat and shall blossom as a vine " (Osee xiv. 8). " Holy stones shall be lifted up over his land. For what is the good thing of Him, and what his beautiful thing, but the corn of the elect, and wine springing forth virgins ?" (Zach. ix. 17). From these and similar passages, the Jews hoped for another and better gift of God. Rabbi Kinchi has even explained the words, " They shall live upon wheat," to mean that " when the Saviour shall appear, there will be a change, a transubstantiation in the nature of wheat."

Our Blessed Lord ever kept in mind His in-

tention of giving this better bread. He ever cherished in His Sacred Heart this divine design. When in the desert He was faint after His fast, the Devil dared to say to Him: "Command that these stones become bread." Our Lord replied: "It is written not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." It is thus written in Deuteronomy: "He afflicted thee with want, and gave thee manna for thy food, which neither thou nor thy fathers knew; to show that not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God" (Deut. viii. 3). It was as if the desert place and His hunger alike called to the mind of Our Lord the manna with which He had fed His people, the bread which was given to them in figure of a true and heavenly Bread of Life.

Later, not content with His multiplication of the loaves, or reminded by it of the manna which Messias was to give, the crowds ask this very sign of Him that they may believe, for even the manna which Moses gave their fathers had not bestowed eternal life. Our Lord seems to allow the fitness of their demand. "Moses gave you not bread from Heaven, but My Father giveth you the true Bread from Heaven. For the bread of God is that which cometh

down from Heaven, and giveth life to the world. . . . I am the Living Bread which came down from Heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world" (John vi.). Finally, ere He suffered, in fulfilment of His deliberate and iterated promise, Our Lord took bread, blessed, and broke, and gave it to them, saying: "THIS IS MY BODY."

In as few and in as forbearing words as possible, let it be pointed out how utterly beneath the ideas even of the Jews are Protestant errors and murmurs against the Holy Eucharist. Protestants assert that CHRIST only meant by these words to speak of His saving doctrine. But, in trying to attach this signification to them, they wrest the natural meaning of every word, and they are contradicted by the Jews who listened to Our Lord, and made comments on His words—comments which clearly prove that they understood Him, as He intended to be understood—literally. To assert that Our Lord means us to use bread and wine only as a type of the spiritual nourishment which His word imparts is an intolerable, a blasphemous imputation of imprudence and recklessness to the Saviour that He should so express Himself as to be misunderstood by the Jews around

Him, and subsequently by His whole Church ! To maintain such an opinion is also to accuse Catholics of committing an idolatry from which Protestants claim to have cleared themselves about the middle of the sixteenth century ! They think, and would have us think, that whereas Moses " the servant " provided for his stiff-necked, perverse followers the strangest and most miraculous food, a bread made for them by Angels, Messias " the Son," in spite of promises, prophecies, figures, and the expectation of mankind, is not to provide and give to us anything more wonderful than " a bit of bread "! Into such senseless blasphemies are blind mortals led, when they refuse to hear the Church !

With pity and prayer for their blindness, let us pass on to consider some points of the resemblance and some of the difference between the Blessed Sacrament and the manna, in which we may find instruction and useful lessons.

It was only when all the provisions brought from Egypt were consumed that the manna was given, and so now " you cannot drink the chalice of the Lord and the chalice of devils " (1 Cor. x. 21). We cannot expect to be fed with the Bread of Angels and at the same time indulge in worldly and sinful pleasures ; we cannot have Egypt's flesh-pots and the manna,

husks of swine, and the Bread of our Father's House!

For forty years, until they entered the Promised Land, the Israelites lived upon the manna. It was a daily miracle, and yet, for the forty years that God was with them, they perpetually angered Him. Wonderful that they should behave so wickedly towards One so good! And yet, is it not more wonderful that we, who every day have a still greater and more miraculous proof of the Divine goodness and power, like the Jews in the desert, never cease from sinning?

First, a dew was spread on the ground, then the manna was laid thereon by Angels' hands. This shows how pure and spotless should be the conscience, how free from sin the heart, whereon the Bread of Life is to rest. *Probet autem seipsum homo* (let a man prove himself), and if he be in sin let the dews of contrition in the Sacrament of Penance wash guilt away and prepare the soul for the Blessed Sacrament.

The manna was to be gathered in the early morning; for although it was able to resist the action of fire, it melted when exposed to the rays of the sun. It was to be sought before the purple curtains of night were fully drawn, and revealed the tawny desert's yellow sands.

So, when the garish light of human reason inquisitively interrogates the Mystery of Faith—It will be silent, nor vouchsafe a sign. For this Pearl of Heaven lies on the dew of a tearful heart, in the light of the Star of Faith which rises there, and gives sufficient light to discern the Body of the Lord.

The manna appeared to each one to have the flavour of the food which he desired. In like manner the Blessed Sacrament is a source of grace, a spiritual nourishment, according to the need, the intention, the prayer of the communicant. It is thus with the fervent.

The manna of the desert was the food of the Jewish people till they reached the Promised Land. The Holy Eucharist is our Spiritual Food, our Viaticum, till we quit the desert of this world. This Bread of Angels makes a man strong and swift as Angels till he reaches Horeb, the Heavenly mountain. Let us hasten to enter into that rest, for in the eternal Sabbath of Everlasting rest no manna is gathered; the Supper of the Lamb shall be that which we collected here on earth before the night in which no man can work. There will be no Sacraments, but there will be the same God, the same sweet JESUS, our Food, our Source of grace, our Life here and there, our Feast, our endless Delight.

The chief points of difference between the Blessed Sacrament and the manna may be said to be these. The manna was the bread of Angels, this is the Bread of God. Manna gave bodily health and strength, this gives spiritual vitality. That was one people's food, this is for the whole world. That was given for a time, this is to last till the consummation of the world; and its efficacy, virtue, and influence will never pass away after it has brought us to a Glorious Resurrection, and to the true Promised Land.

## The Living Bread.

In the New Testament there are no types of the Holy Eucharist; types and shadows cease when the Desire of the eternal hills comes, and the Word is made Flesh. But manifestations of Divine power are recorded, declarations concerning it, most explicit teachings of Our Lord are repeated, emphatic unmistakable statements precede in the New Testament the inspired narrative of the Solemn Institution of the most Holy Sacrament.

The first of Our Lord's miracles, as related by St. John, is one of a transubstantiation to which even the senses of the guests at Cana bore witness, as the outward appearance as

well as the substance of the water was changed into that of wine with perceptible taste and qualities. The miracle was worked to meet the bodily needs of those present, and therefore had this suitable completeness in displaying the same goodness and power shown later by Christ when, to feed our souls, He changes bread into His Body and wine into His Blood without altering their appearances at the Consecration, and thus sets forth the superiority of spirit to matter, thus increases our merit in believing the Mystery of Faith. Again, in the multiplication of the loaves the miracle was similar to that whereby Our Lord would later sacramentally multiply His own Sacred Body. On these two occasions—at Cana and in the wilderness — the unostentatious exercise of Divine power may be said to have been a preparation for the yet greater, though less perceptible, miracle—the stupendous Transubstantiation wrought by the same Divine power, to which nothing is impossible or difficult, on the first day of the Azymes at Jerusalem, and afterwards on every day from sunrise until sunset throughout the world till the end of time.

The Gospel teaching concerning the Holy Eucharist is to be found in the sixth chapter of St. John, and the words of Our Lord have

been already given in our preceding chapter on the Manna. The teaching of CHRIST'S Church has ever been in word and meaning identical with that of her Divine Master. But, alas! even now many who consider themselves true Christians are eager to contend, murmur, and dispute that teaching, though it is identical in word and meaning with that of CHRIST. They separate from her, and "walk no more with Him" (John vi. 67), and cannot see that they repeat the identical objections, words, and meaning of the perverse Jews, and the unworthy conduct of Our Lord's followers who "went back"!

The account of the manner in which our Saviour performed the deed of love He had contemplated and cherished eternally, which from the hour of His Incarnation His Sacred Heart had desired most ardently, this account is given by the three Evangelists—St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke. These three tell us chiefly of CHRIST'S actions; the fourth Evangelist, St. John, gives us the discourse which JESUS made to His own at the Heavenly Banquet of the Living Bread. Favoured souls, evidently dear to Our Lord, and trusted with many of His secrets, have added to the Gospel narrative details which are not of faith, though clearly of private revelation. We may safely

take their contribution into account when we meditate on the Mystery of Faith.

On the night before He suffered, Our Blessed Lord celebrated the rite of the Paschal lamb, and thus, not without honour, abrogated it for ever. He laid aside His robe, took a towel, girded Himself, put water into a basin, and washed the feet of the Twelve, drying them with the towel. They were His guests, invited to this New and Sacred Banquet, and, according to Eastern usage, their feet should be washed; and, to teach love and humility by example as well as by precept, He Himself performed the lowly office even towards the traitor. We may learn in what a state of purity we must be when we communicate.

Next, Our Lord caused the supper-table to be removed, and bade them be seated around a smaller and higher one.[1] It was covered with clean, fine linen—some say, provided by the wealthy owner of the house; others say, worked expressly by our Blessed Lady. A large paten of precious metal and a chalice of the same material were placed before Him. He directed them to bring Him from the other table a portion of the unleavened wheaten bread. This He placed on the paten, and into the

[1] Subsequently used by St. Peter, and now preserved in the Lateran Basilica.

chalice with His own hands He poured wine made from that country's juice of the grape. And doubtless He prepared the while with loving look, with words of fire and darts and shafts of internal grace, the Twelve Communicants for participation in the Mystery of Faith. All, except the guilty traitor, yielded to the enthralling devotion of the New Rite.

Seated at the table which was thenceforth to become the holiest of altars, JESUS took the bread into His holy and venerable hands, as in the desert He had taken the loaves, as He would presently take the chalice into those almighty hands: He raised His eyes to Heaven, to Thee, God His Almighty Father. (We hold this on the authority of Tradition: and Scripture tells us that He raised those eyes to Heaven when He called Lazarus back to life, and when He prayed for His Apostles.) Giving thanks for the power and permission to work this miracle—(The thanksgiving of a First Communicant must surely be most heartfelt, but the thrilling exultation and gratitude of a priest celebrating his First Mass seems more like this giving thanks of Our Lord to the Eternal Father)—He lowered His eyes and blessed the bread, whether with words or with the Sign of the Cross is uncertain. Perhaps, as He was instituting the Sacrifice of the Mass,

He used both words and action, the blessing being a prayer that it might be " an oblation blessed, approved, ratified, and accepted," as priests now say before the Consecration. He spoke the sacramental, consecrating words, and by them changed the substance of the bread into the Substance of His adorable Body. In like manner He took the chalice into His hands, and changed the wine into His Blood. He broke the Consecrated Host into fragments; first communicated Himself, as is generally thought, then gave the paten with the particles to him who sat next, saying: " Take and eat ye all of this." Each lifted and ate the Living Bread. In like manner He drank from the chalice, then gave it to them, bidding them all to drink of it.

It is not certain that Our Lord communicated Himself, although it is most probable that He did, because He was offering Sacrifice —in fact celebrating the First Mass, in which the priest should partake of the victim—also because of probable mysterious effects, fully known to Himself alone, and because here also, as when He was baptized, He would give us an example.

Did Our Lord give Holy Communion to His Mother ? Many are the conjectures on this question. " It is fitting and not repugnant,"

says Scotus of the Immaculate Conception. The same may be said here. Most writers think that Our Lady, so soon to be tried with agonies worse than death, would not be deprived of the Source of all strength. They surmise that St. Gabriel, St. Peter, or St. John carried the Blessed Sacrament to her where she knelt apart in another chamber. Fra Angelico, however, has pictured Our Lady as present, and for myself I gladly follow the Beato in this view.

When all had devoutly communicated, they joined in thanksgiving for the Divine Gift. The Thanksgiving was a hymn. Probably they sang it. Some think it was the Psalm *Credidi;* but this could hardly be called a hymn. Most commentators, with greater likelihood, say it was a new hymn, and that the Apostles were especially assisted by the Holy Ghost to take part with their Divine Master in this solemn act. We ourselves may be content with, and grateful for, the narrative as it stands. There still, however, remains a question to be noticed, because so many ask it, to be answered, if answered, only doubtingly—the question whether the traitor Judas received the Holy Communion from Our Lord. Many think that he did not. The words of Our Lord: "What thou dost do quickly," the fact that

he was given the morsel dipped in the dish used in the Paschal rite, are arguments in favour of this opinion. Our Lord bade him withdraw, lest he should be harmed by the rising indignation of the others, and this while He was still seated at the supper-table on which the dish stood, before He moved to the smaller table that served as altar for His Eucharistic Sacrifice. Moreover, JESUS in pity would thus prevent the crime of a sacrilegious Communion. Such considerations induce many to hold the opinion that Judas was prevented from communicating with the rest. On the other hand, as many, if not more, hold that Judas before departing on his terrible treachery did communicate, did eat and drink judgment to himself, even whilst receiving like the others the priestly power to consecrate. They think that our Saviour, by His forbearance with the traitor, by enduring the insult and screening the guilty, gave a consoling lesson to His Church, which in moments when she must keep silence she thankfully remembers, and suffers the cockle to remain in the midst of her wheat. The faithful also learn that the unworthiness of the minister is no obstacle to the valid exercise of his faculties, though he uses them at his own peril. It is mournful that a meditation on the Institution of the Mystery of Faith

should be marred by a discussion whether one of the very First Communions was sacrilegious, to be followed, alas! by other private and public outrageous crimes committed against the Most Holy Sacrament. But we gain a deeper knowledge of the great, unconquerable love with which "JESUS loved His own even to the end." For ourselves, to whom the Living Bread is offered daily to sustain us now and bring us to life on the Last Day, we ought to invoke Our Lord's especial assistance, such as He vouchsafed to give to His Apostles and Disciples. In preparation, He washed their feet, He enkindled the fire of burning love in the hearts of the Emmaus Communicants. In thanksgiving, He assisted His Apostles, as we have described, singing with them that one only recorded time the hymn of praise and grateful love.

# PART II

## THE HOLY EUCHARIST IN THE CHURCH

1. THE REAL PRESENCE
2. THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS
3. HOLY COMMUNION
4. BENEDICTION
5. VISITS TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

## THE HOLY EUCHARIST IN THE CHURCH

### The Real Presence.

God is everywhere: He fills Heaven and earth, and in Divine Immensity is present beyond all place and space. Earth's inhabitants pay little heed to the presence of God, so He has chosen to emphasize it in divers ways. He has called attention to it by seeming to come hither from afar, by descending from Heaven, by making " the hills of the world bow down beneath the journeys of His eternity " (Hab. iii. 6). Reason tells man that the Creator is ever at hand, supporting him in life, being, and activity; and it warns us that visible, material things of themselves give sufficient indication, afford unmistakable proof of the Divine Presence. Still, reason cannot put man in soul-satisfying intercourse and communion with his unseen, unfelt, and Hidden Creator. Therefore, in the heart of man have been those unappeased yearnings, from man's heart come those groans of which St. Paul speaks, groans which

declare man's longing desire for closer union, more intimate relations with God. No wonder! The heart of man was made by God for Himself, to be His living tabernacle and temple throbbing with adoration and love; but, alas! the sin of man's heart compelled the Creator to withdraw from such union, and to deprive Himself of His "delight to be with the children of men" (Prov. viii. 31).

The Almighty could have contented Himself with the one act of creation, and then have remained hidden and unseen, as though He had really gone away and left to man the duty of transmitting the history of this one benefit, and maintaining the obligation of worship thereby laid upon the successive generations of the human race. Instead, what intercourse, what Divine visits, what friendships and generous familiarities! Sufficient at last to enable God to tell His People, without possibility of contradiction, that it could easily keep His command of loving Him, because "the word is very nigh unto thee" (Deut. xxx. 14).

And yet, all these betokenings of His presence were but as absence, for He was ever promising so much more; and at last, in the fulness of time, He really came—"THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH." As though God saw that men would never know Him and love Him as

their Creator unless He did more than create, He became Incarnate and dwelt among us, redeemed us, and died for us. Forthwith we have to consider His conduct towards us while He thus dwelt amongst us. The Gospels relate how gentle He was, how pitiful, how tender; they record His sympathy with the suffering, the sad, the poor. St. John writes that they "saw His glory." Still more manifest was "the benignity, and goodness," "the charity of God"; God, in a Body and Soul like ours, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, teaching the Twelve and the shepherdless multitudes to say to their Creator: "Our Father, who art in Heaven." When He comes as Redeemer, He surpasses the condescensions of His dealings with us as our Creator. We see so many acts of mercy, generosity so gratuitous, parallel—only more stupendous—with those of old. We see Him doing so much more than the office of Redemption involves, such as giving His own Mother to mankind; as though, by being more than Redeemer, He would win and lovingly compel the love which is fully due to Him for Creation alone. The Redemption is a continuation of the Divine love of God our Father, made manifest and proved to be infinite by the gift of His Only-begotten Son to be our Saviour. Yet even this is not all. JESUS

will not redeem us and then go away, content to leave the record of His Redemption to be preserved by us, grounding His doubled right and claim to our love on that completed, irrevocable benefit; but, cost what it may, He will add a still more astounding favour—He will stay with us: "I will not leave you orphans." "I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 20). Had He quite gone away, His love would have felt the pain of parting, and our miseries would have been less provided for. "Without Me you can do nothing." In short, without the Real Presence, without JESUS in the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar, Redemption would soon become a mere event of sacred history, nearly forgotten, like many another record of the past.

Hearing His words, receiving His Gift of Living Bread, the Apostles can take courage, and look out without dejection on the dreary world where they are to work when JESUS has left them. Let toil, trouble, persecution, and martyrdom come; nothing can separate them from their JESUS, who has promised to be ever with them. Mysteriously, supernaturally, with a new kind of life, with a Presence that, though miraculous, is most real and actual, in a garb that is a disguise, with a sweetness that is irre-

sistible, He will be ever with them. No wonder that, as we are told, they "break Bread from house to house," that they come together "to eat the Body of the Lord," that the Jews and pagans soon find out the fact, which they misrepresent, that at their meetings the Christians eat the Flesh and drink the Blood of Mary's Child!

We can measure the disciples' joy, we can understand their gratitude, their hunger and thirst; for have we not ourselves "tasted and seen that the Lord is sweet"? But have we sufficiently taken thought of Our Lord? Have we not, because He is "silent in His love," omitted to take count of *His* feelings of love? They were the source of the Mystery of Faith; they saturate the vitality of the Living Bread. Alas! we can scarcely claim to be of those whom "the Charity of Christ urges" (2 Cor. v. 14). For, have we ever done our best to try and fathom the deep ocean and abyss of love whence this Sacred Host, this Priceless Pearl is given up? Have we gone to the uttermost limits of creation, to see if there be any love like unto His love? Have we searched the heavens above, flying thither on wings of the dove—the Heaven of heavens, whence descends this Bread of Life? Have we tried to "be able to comprehend, with all

the Saints, what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth—to know also the charity of Christ, which surpasses all knowledge" (Eph. iii. 18)? And if we have tried, we have failed—and cannot but fail—and yet will again try; for "they that eat Me, shall yet hunger: and they that drink Me, shall yet thirst" (Ecclus. xxiv. 29).

Truly, this Mystery of Faith is utterly incomprehensible, unless it is meditated on as the Mystery of Love. "Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end" (John xiii. 1). It was love, simply and only love that impelled our JESUS to prolong His earthly Presence by entering into this new and strangest mode of existence. God the Father so loved the world as to send His only Son to die for the world: God the Son so loved the world as to remain here, till the consummation, in this Sacramental Life, which to us is life indeed, but to Himself, from the rising of the sun to the setting, a multiplied, mystical death! At the institution of this Mystery it was love which made Him exclaim: "With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you, before I suffer" (Luke xxii. 15). Around the Altar-table were the Twelve, expectant and attentive, brought to a state of sadness by the dread that they

were about to lose their Master. They were shocked when told that one of themselves would betray Him. Still, deep devotion took possession of their hearts, because they perceived from His words, and actions, and looks of ecstatic charity, that He was about to bestow upon them, ere He suffered death and returned to the Father, His Legacy of Love, which He had promised should be theirs, to hold and distribute to His flock to the end of the world. The first miracle of Our Lord's public life, in answer to His Mother's prayer at Cana, was a transubstantiation of water into wine: the last miracle was similar, but transcendently greater—the Transubstantiation of bread and wine into His Body and Blood. Neither the first nor the last, be it always remembered, was impossible to His Divine Omnipotence. The Apostles watched and listened with rapt attention. They saw Him raise His eyes to His Almighty Father; they heard the words of Consecration; they beheld Him first partake Himself of the New and Heavenly Food—thus uniting His Sacred Heart with their hearts and the hearts of all whom they would teach to love Him—and then, melted in tenderness, they in turn received their First Communion.

Thus did the Mystery of the Real Presence succeed the Mystery of the Incarnation.

When God by His power creates all things out of nothing, He holds and sustains them: so that, " in Him we live, and move, and be " (Acts xvii. 28). In like manner, in order to sustain His more wonderful, His second creation—the children of His Passion, He remains invisibly but actually, infallibly and to faith discernibly, with us in the Church—as really as He was with Mary and Joseph in the stable of Bethlehem, as He was with those He " loved to the end." O Miracle of Love Divine! The Word, by the gift of a countless Sacramental ubiquity, seems to impart to His Sacred Humanity which He so cherishes a participation in the Divine attribute of Omnipresence!

In the beginning, God planted in Paradise the Tree of Life; in His new creation, He gives access to another Tree of Life, more excellent than the first which man forfeited and lost. The Tree in Eden never yielded fruit to mortals, whereas now " we sit down in the shadow of Him whom we love, and His fruit is sweet to our palate." It is not now as when " He came unto His own and His own received Him not." He is with us, of us, He gives us life, and health, and growth. He is Himself our Daily Bread. Without Him our churches would become like those held from us by enemies—

mausoleums of a dead religion, museums rather than Houses of Prayer. Without Him, we should feel under interdict and excommunicated. Without Him, we should be lost. Then, Blessed for ever be the Real Presence! Blessed be JESUS in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar!

## THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

The mysterious figure of Melchisedech stands conspicuous among the memories of the past which were reverenced by the Jewish nation; and David and St. Paul were inspired to assert the likeness they saw between CHRIST Our Lord and the King-Priest. It is as though both were led to hope that their nation would accept and love Messias the more readily, when shown His resemblance to one who took tithes from their father Abraham, before whom that great Patriarch bent to be blessed, by such homage acknowledging the superiority of Salem's king—" For without all contradiction that which is less is blessed by the better " (Heb. viii.).

But, that on which each sacred Writer principally insisted is a point of supreme interest to the children of the Church, the faithful of Christ in every age. The Psalmist and Apostle both dwell alike and chiefly on the identity

of priesthood possessed by Our Lord and Melchisedech, that primitive priesthood which from the beginning was man's highest prerogative, in whose exercise Abel, its Proto-martyr, lost his life outside the gates of Paradise. In their loyalty to CHRIST, in their zeal for His honour, they enlarge on that priesthood which they know He was so delighted to receive from His Father.

In virtue of the Incarnation and the Redemption, Our Blessed Lord holds many offices, is entitled to many dignities. He is King, Judge, Teacher, Good Shepherd, Redeemer, and, above all, Priest—our Great High-Priest. What importance attaches to this His office can be gathered from the Psalm: " The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech." We may venture to surmise that one of the chief reasons why Our Lord " delights to be with the children of men " is because He for ever performs in our midst His office of High-Priest. That He is with us all days, to the consummation of the world, we know; but do we well know, do we realize as we might, His motives for remaining with us ? Amongst these motives stands pre-eminent His desire to exercise His " everlasting priesthood " (Heb. vii.).

Is there any special reason for CHRIST'S remaining with us in this character, discharging the duties of this office in God's world? Why is it "fitting that we should have such a High-Priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb. vii. 26)? It must be remembered that according to the design of its Maker the whole world is but a vast place of worship. Those who inhabit the earth are here to know, love, and serve God—in other words, to worship God. The rational creature recognizes his obligation of rendering religious worship to the Creator, but of himself is become unable to fulfil it worthily. Still, the attempt has ever been made in every age, in every land. All nations, even those sunk deepest in moral corruption and degradation, have retained some rite of sacrifice, and have maintained some sort of priesthood.

The world could do without kings, without lawyers, without doctors, but not without priests. It requires that worship should be rightly offered to God, worship befitting His Supreme Majesty. Nothing of its own is worthy of the Divine acceptance; and men, full of infirmity, blemished with human frailty, dare not of themselves take to themselves the honour of priesthood. Therefore does Our

Lord retain His everlasting Priesthood; therefore, wherever two or three are gathered together in His name for sacrifice, He is with them. In every celebration of Holy Mass He takes part, not only as the suitable, sufficient, priceless Victim, worthy of all acceptance, but also as the Sacrificer of that Victim, " always living to make intercession for us " (Heb. vii. 25). At the right hand of the Father He officiates eternally, in the plenitude of Omnipotence multiplying His Presence, so that, wherever the Father is to be worshipped in spirit and truth, He may be the High-Priest and the Victim laid in propitiatory sacrifice on every altar in every place " from the rising of the sun even to the going down." We mortal priests, His poor, unworthy assistants, appear at the altar, clad in appropriate vestments, but our Great High-Priest is above, clothed in sacerdotal garments and gold girdle, " white as white wool and as snow." Representing Him at the moment of Consecration, we speak words of supernatural power; in those words He, the Divine Word, operates, and transubstantiates all that we hold in our hands into the living Flesh of the Lamb of God hidden beneath fleecy Appearances. In the chalice which we grasp so heedfully there gleams, when the Consecration is completed, the

Precious Blood of the Spotless Lamb, " which speaketh better than that of Abel " (Heb. xii. 24). Thus does our Saviour perpetuate the atoning Sacrifice He offered on Calvary, commemorating His Passion and Death, and making application of its infinite merit by the Voice of Blood still shed—though mystically and painlessly—" for the remission of sins."

It is joy to know that this His delight to be with His people, their Priest and Victim, now costs Him no manner of pain or sorrow, as once it did. In the Sacrifice on Calvary He suffered intensely in soul even more than in body. From the depths of His soul's anguish, worse than the moan of thirst, came the terrible cry: " My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ?" From the abyss of His sacramental Self-annihilation escapes no sound; there, the Sacred Heart suffers no abandonment, is deprived of no Heavenly bliss. Wherever He may be laid, be it on the unclean heart of an enemy, or on the guileless lips of an innocent First Communicant, He is safe from every hurt and harm. A sunbeam is still a sunbeam—a ray of glad brightness, whether it falls on a fair flower or on a miry spot: and thus is JESUS impassible in the Blessed Sacrament.

Great too must be the joy of our own

hearts to have our High-Priest for ever always with us, so lovingly ministering to our needs. Verily, there is no nation to which He has done in like manner as He has to the " Little Flock " pastured by His Vicars even while, like St. Peter, they are " kept in prison," shut up within the Vatican! It is easy to understand why so many of our Separated Brethren eagerly try to persuade themselves and others that they still have a priesthood and valid orders. They renounce the false doctrines of their Protestant predecessors; they recognize that sacrifice is the highest form of religious worship, and the Sacrifice of the Mass the commanded and ordained rite whereby CHRIST our High-Priest and His Christian people worship God. May they quickly recognize another truth, which also it is necessary for salvation to believe—that he is guilty of profanity, as St. Jerome writes, who celebrates Mass, who eats the Flesh of the Lamb of God elsewhere than in the Catholic Church confided to the care of St. Peter and his Successors!

Our own devotion to Mass in the case of many might easily be greater. Every morning JESUS comes—yes, descends from Heaven whenever Mass is said. At the throne of God He concurs and co-operates in what is said and done by priest at the altar and people in the

church. He is in our midst as the Chief Offerer of the adorable Sacrifice. Surely, absence, except it be unavoidable, is disgraceful, disloyal, irreligious! While Our Lord is immolating Himself for our sake, we are still sluggardly abed, yielding to tepidity, indulging in sloth! Let the daily Mystical Death of CHRIST excite some spirit of mortification within us, rouse us to take up daily our own poor, little cross. Prayer, meditation, rosary, sermons, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, Night Service, Benediction—all these are right and good; but let us never think them equal to daily Mass! *Introibo ad altare Dei: ad Deum qui lætificat juventutem meam!*

## HOLY COMMUNION.

In the preceding chapter I have ventured, though unable and unworthy, to draw attention to the feelings of Our Lord in the Holy Mass as our High-Priest, the Offerer and Sacrificer. May He forgive the presumption! Some such considerations seemed necessary to deal fully with this glorious yet over-awing Theme—*Laudis Thema specialis*—set me *Jussu Superiorum*, and now, after many long years, printed *Permissu Superiorum*. And so, again, it remains for us to treat of the other part that

JESUS takes on Himself in every Mass, oh, so lovingly! the part of Victim, the priceless, Divine Victim, sanctified, consecrated, and immolated to the God of Heaven and earth.

Victim-like, the Sacred Host is laid upon the altar; a moment ago, it was bread in the hands of the priest; he has spoken four words, and —it is bread no longer, but JESUS, who, by a miracle of Divine Omnipotence and Love, in a kind of obedience greater even than that " unto death "—His Godhead hidden, His Manhood concealed and disguised—begins, at the call of a priest, a Sacramental Life. The Consecration is its birth: within the little limits of a linen corporal, in the space of some ten minutes, the Three-and-Thirty Years are renewed in concentrated, condensed form; and the Communion of the Mass is the Consummation and Mystical Death of that self-immolated Victim, that *Verbum Abbreviatum!*

Consecration, then, leads to Communion; for in the Sacred Heart of JESUS are two intense desires—one, that His Father should be worshipped in the highest possible way; the other, that the worshippers, so dear to Him, should derive from their act the greatest possible and sweetest benefit. And He accomplishes each object by means of the nature of a sacrificial act. For, in sacrifice the victim is

divided: part is destroyed or consumed, as if accepted by God, to whom the offering is made; part is eaten by those who offer the sacrifice, as a token that pardon is granted, and peace, friendship, and love deepened or restored. At Holy Mass, it is as if the Divine Attributes descend, fasten on and with infinite good-pleasure consume the Spotless Victim. This is at the Consecration, when Body and Blood are successively lifted towards Heaven; and then, at the Communion, at the *Domine, non sum dignus*, it is granted to us to receive our Portion—nothing less than JESUS Himself—and so is the Sacrifice of the Mass accomplished and complete; and so Our Lord's desires are fulfilled.

The children of the Church should take courage, and not only hear Mass but go in greater number to Holy Communion.[1] There can be no doubt at all that Our Lord "with desire" desires this. His Heart has an intense longing to be received into our hearts. By going to Communion we give Him a distinct and personal pleasure, like His pleasure in holding the little children in His arms; for union is the climax of created love, and like

[1] Written long ago, in 1866; now no longer needed, since the exhortations of the Holy Father Pius X. on Frequent Communion.

unto this is the Communion of Uncreated Love. " I am come to cast fire upon the earth "; here is that fire. No cherub wings his way hither with burning coal, but a priest stands before us at the altar, and in his hand he holds the Blessed Sacrament. That little Host is like the crystal which can gather to itself rays of light and heat, and produce a mighty flame and fire. Only, the Sacred Host is more: for it has not to collect—it contains within itself " consuming fire "; it is the furnace of the Sacred Heart. There: that Heart lives, loves, glows, and burns. " Behold, in the firmament that was over the head of the cherubim, there appeared as it were a sapphire-stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne. And he said: Go in between the wheels that are under the cherubim and fill thy hand with the coals of fire that are between the cherubim, and pour them out upon the city. . . . This is the living creature that I saw by the river Chobar " (Ezech. x.). But *here* what we see is a priest, and in his hand—to cast upon the city—the living, loving, burning Sacred Heart ! If the sound of the Voice of JESUS heard on the way to Emmaus was enough to make the hearts of the disciples burn, what flames and fires must be enkindled within us by Holy Communion !

Let it not be forgotten that it is for the soul's own sake and advantage that JESUS Our Love bids us eat and drink. According to the teachings of Thaulère (*Institutions*, chap. xxxix.), some of the effects of a good and fervent Communion are these:

1. It produces a contempt for earthly things. "I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but as dung, that I may gain Christ" (Phil. iii. 8). By comparison, we learn how they hinder us in knowing God, in loving God, how they weary us and leave bitterness behind.

2. It draws us to God. People who delight in worldly amusements often judge that in piety there is nothing to attract and comfort men. They see that God is served assiduously by His servants, but think it is because He is feared rather than loved, because of the hope of future reward rather than the experience of any present happiness. How little they know the sweetness of the yoke of Christ, the allurements of His tenderness, the inebriating delights found in this Heavenly Banquet of Holy Communion!

3. It makes men like Angels; it gives to their spiritual part, the soul and its powers, a certain supernatural strength and vigour, and preponderance over the earthly and lower tastes and inclinations of the flesh.

4. It increases and intensifies love, enkindles within us its sacred fires. St. Philip's heart was hot, his face gave out rays of sparkling light after his Communions.

5. It inspires and authorizes a certain confidence and trust in God like that expressed in the *Te Deum—In Te, Domine, speravi: non confundar in æternum.* Our spirit, like Mary's, exults " in God our Saviour."

6. It deepens the peace and fraternal charity of the faithful. " The multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul " (Acts iv. 32); they were all Daily Communicants.

7. It gives joy and refreshing gladness to the heart. Think of St. Philip's " joy in JESUS "; see him hover over the Blessed Sacrament upon the altar, like a bee on a flower, lingering, delaying, reluctant to part, by consuming It, with That which his heart and soul, and senses, his sight and smell and touch found so unspeakably delicious !

8. It is our soul's closest union with God. For the brief, blissful period of Communion, the soul seems like the drops of water in the wine of the chalice—is absorbed and lost in its sacramental partaking of the Divine Nature.

9. It effects not only a moral union with the living JESUS, but a species of transformation, amounting to a kind of Possession by the Spirit

of JESUS. We become living members of the living JESUS, as St. Paul describes. We can say with St. Chrysostom: *Huic nos unimur, et facti sumus unum corpus Christi et una caro.* Or, with Paschasius, we may call out: *O Deus meus, substantia mea!*

" O Mystery of Love Divine!
I cannot compass all I have,
For all Thou hast and art are mine.
Sweet Sacrament, we Thee adore!
O make us love Thee more and more!"

FABER.

## BENEDICTION.

It is said of our St. Philip, the Apostle of Rome, that his heart's desire was to revive in the Romans the fervour of the Early Christians. Now, it is evident that much of that fervour must have come from the Holy Eucharist; for those Early Christians not only had daily Communion but something very like our Benediction Service, and even more devotional. Thanks to the Persecutions, they were allowed to carry the Blessed Sacrament to their own homes; and so, literally the Word Made Flesh *dwelt* among them.

Later, in her own day, St. Clare was like an early Christian in her loving familiarity. She did not hesitate to take the Pyx into her hands,

as a priest might, and bear the Most Holy to her convent walls to defend them from Saracen assailants. There, she heard the voice of her Divine Spouse: *Ego vos custodiam semper*—words, be it noted, with which our Exposition Litanies conclude.

Then, came the age of Gothic screens and gloom: and soon there was want of a St. Philip. St. John tells us in his Gospel that certain Gentiles who were at Jerusalem to adore on the festival day, came to Philip amongst the Apostles, saying to him: "Sir, we would see JESUS" (chap. xii.). Why they sought the good offices of this Apostle we are not told: but, as his name is given, it is pleasant to be able to point out that our own dear Saint not only shares with the Apostle that name of Philip, but also in his days fulfilled a duty similar to that requested from the Apostle. It is no more than what all acknowledge to be due to our St. Philip to declare him to be the Saint who was chosen in modern times to show JESUS in the BLESSED SACRAMENT to the children of the Church. Through his instrumentality a revival of piety and devotion was brought about. It was he who led the inhabitants of Rome to the Mystery of Faith, who renewed the fervours of Apostolic times by bringing back their use of Frequent Communion, and

hearing the Daily Word of God, which custom lasts with his sons to this present day.

But Holy Communion did not content Philip and his disciples; he used again and again to take them to Exposition and Benediction in the various churches, and there—show them JESUS. And what he did four centuries ago in Rome he has done in our own day here in London and for us. In no boastful spirit is it that what is written here is recorded, rather with the deep shame and sense of unworthiness of one who has corresponded badly to a grace vouchsafed through many years. Let the following words be considered as a kind of message from St. Philip, reminding us that he is our friend and father, who came here to England, whose *Flores Martyrum* he used to greet so lovingly, to cast the coal of Divine fire on this northern region of "cold hearts and tongues," to bring back faith to many who had been robbed of it, and love to those who had let their love grow cold.

About the beginning of the fourteenth century, an increase of devotion to the Blessed Sacrament caused the Church to introduce the rite of Processions and Expositions. Two hundred years later, came the rite of Benediction; and no doubt St. Philip and his spiritual children often went to Benediction, as well as to

those Expositions where with especial joy he organized the watching hour by hour before the Most Holy, encouraging all by the pious discourses he was permitted to deliver, layman as he then was. Since those days, devotion to Benediction has steadily increased everywhere; and our dear Father Philip has been doing his best to keep it up. In the course of a year, Benediction is given in his church of the Oratory some four hundred times—that is, oftener than there are days in the year. There is Benediction twice a day on Sundays and during all the Month of Mary, once a day during Rosary October; this reaches the number given. We have to thank St. Philip for this, above all the other things he has been doing in London during the last sixty years. Nothing is more marvellous and edifying than the countless Evening Services and Benedictions which the hard-worked Clergy of London freely provide for their congregations throughout the weekdays. Few in number, but fervent and self-sacrificing, they rival and surpass in their zeal what was started at the Oratory. Will they, my St. Philip, let me say: "They are true sons of thine indeed"?

We have treated of Mass and of Communion: and now something must be said of that most—permit the word—popular Service, Benedic-

tion. Our greatest form of worship is the Holy Mass, and it is Our Lord's own act. It sanctifies the morning of each day. It is offered by a priest, "*prius pro suis delictis, deinde pro populo*"; so we can gather from these words in what dispositions we should hear our morning Mass. Exposition, the Forty Hours' Devotion, has also a purpose and meaning of its own. Every knee then bends in prolonged adoration of the Incarnate Word; we walk in His Royal Procession; we acclaim our Sacramental Sovereign as the Head of all creation, the Immortal and Invisible King of Ages. But Benediction is another development of devotion, with an attractive beauty of its own, which accounts for the popularity of the Service. St. John writes those sublime words which force us to our knees when we repeat them—"THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH"; then the Evangelist adds: "AND DWELT AMONG US." These words lend themselves to an explanation of our devotion to Benediction; for in the Mystery of Faith Our Lord still dwells among us; we rejoice in all which this implies, and we gather round the Tabernacle where He dwells, and wait lovingly till the Royal Inmate comes forth—till, as I have said, Philip shows us JESUS!

Benediction, then, is the domestic part of

the Sacramental continuation of the life of Our Lord on the earth. Truly, He keeps His promise : " I will not leave you orphans." He dwells with us; He converses with us; He who once " had not where to lay His head " now has many an altar-home. And at Benediction He grants audience, without the restraint of Mass, the solemnity of Exposition.

We come, because " we would see JESUS "; and He appears, because He delights to be with the children of men. In the morning Mass, He is occupied with His Eternal Father; He seems to be attentive to the petition of the priest who celebrates, or of those for whose intention the Mass may be said, though I may hardly suggest the idea; for every Mass is the *Vestrum Sacrificium* of all who are present. But at Benediction how different! He does not seem to belong to the priests in the sanctuary one bit more than to the congregation kneeling in the church. At Mass it is not so; there, the priest has his own inalienable share, and others, for whose intention it may be said—of which we need know nothing—have theirs; though even then we, if present, also always have a portion. But at Benediction all are equal, the priest himself has no advantage over others, unless it be to kneel a little closer to our dearest Lord.

The pious custom of singing the praises of the Mother in the presence of the Son, as we do constantly at Benediction, helps towards the home-like feeling of this Service. If the Lady-altar in all our churches helps to make them homes to us, and if all churches where there is no such provision made for devotion to Our Lady are cold and dreary, then it follows that our joyous praises of Mary please her Divine Son, not only as our due acknowledgment of " the great things " He has done for her, but as a grateful recognition of the familiar way in which He and His Mother " take root in an honourable people " and dwell in " the household of the Faith." No doubt it is this that greatly helps to make Benediction so attractive, this singing of litanies, this praising of His Mother and our Mother—which cannot but be the most acceptable way of giving praise and thanks and benediction back to Him. We come at evening, after the cares and toils and faults of the day, " as the workman welcomes evening's shades," and betakes himself home to those whom he loves, for whom he labours; so do we come to JESUS and Mary, whom we love, for whom we work, and ask a blessing from the Blessed Sacrament and the Blessed amongst women.

We are told by St. Thomas Aquinas that

Holy Communion is a foretaste of the sweetness of God our Saviour which is to be ours in the Supper of the Lamb. May we not add that Benediction is a foresight of our JESUS, of the vision which we beg the Mother of Mercy to vouchsafe to us after our exile is ended and our true home is reached? Yes, the very word Benediction has a sound of Heaven; the service inspires a hope of Heaven—and it is *our* Philip's answer to us when we also say, "We would see JESUS."

## VISITS TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

After giving the Apostles proof that He loved them to the end, by making in their favour His New and Eternal Testament, and even before death distributing the Divine Legacy of Infinite Love, Our Saviour bestowed upon them a new and appropriate title: "I will not now call you servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doth. But I have called you friends" (John xv.). The name was to be a memorial of what He had done before their eyes, and a mark of the trust He had placed in them by telling them this most impenetrable Secret, and admitting them to the Mystery of Faith. The permission to be present at the Institution of this most august

Sacrament and to be the first to partake thereof was proof of an intimacy of friendship which it would tax the infinite resources of Omnipotence to increase.

We may consider that we also have received this consoling name, for we share in the gracious Gift. Were Our Lord to call us sinners, we would be content with the name; for He says He pities them, and we know He died for them. Were He to call us servants, we should count it a great privilege; for to be the servant of JESUS CHRIST is to hold highest honour. But He deliberately chooses the word, and calls us friends.

Now, let us look at the definition of friendship, and see if there can be true and real friendship between God and ourselves. We shall discover whether Our Lord uses the word literally, or only in some modified sense. Friendship, then, is a mutual right to reciprocal, gratuitous, permanent, and manifest love, resulting from the promise of such love, given at least implicitly, and accepted by both. Violators of friendship are therefore called false and unfaithful. Now, God promises His love gratuitously, freely; and by this pledging of Himself He gives us a right to His love, whereas His right to ours is vindicated by the very fact of our created existence and the constitution

of our nature. Again, His love is eternal, abiding, everlasting; ours is full of imperfection, is not, because of our inconstancy, permanent; and yet, with His grace, it can prove stronger than death, and after death it can no more grow cold. His love is manifested by the stupendous present, the gift of His Body and Blood, that love-token of Infinite Love. We are friends, then, He and we ; and never more evidently so than when we are with the Blessed Sacrament.

A duty of friendship, a privilege of friendship, is to visit those we love. Friends are never long apart; they exchange frequent visits when they cannot be always together. When the disciples of John asked JESUS, "Master, where dwellest Thou?" Our Lord treated them as friends, for He invited them to "come and see"; He took them to His home, "and they stayed with Him that day"—they were accorded the privilege of friendship. Others, like Nicodemus, in like manner spent hours visiting JESUS, and conversing in private with Him. We need not envy them: we too can exercise without restraint this privilege of familiar friendship, and at all hours make Visits to the Blessed Sacrament.

Commentators on Holy Scripture differ in their opinions as to the length of time passed

by our First Parents in Paradise before the Fall which led to their expulsion and the loss of its innocent joys and privileges. From the Bible narrative, it would seem to be probable that it was not so brief as many suppose; for it looks as though in His love the Almighty treated them as His dear children and friends, it seems that they were accustomed to count on being granted audience when they fearlessly waited in the "Garden of pleasure" till "they heard the Lord God walking there at the afternoon air." Thus they would have been the very first to enjoy the privilege of friendship with God. Exodus and Leviticus record more distinctly the condescension of God in His treating, on Sinai and in the cloud-wrapped tabernacle, His servant Moses not as a servant but "face to face, as a man is wont to speak to his friend" (Exod. xxxiii. 2). Nor can we omit that later Vision on Mount Tabor, and the Divine friendliness there shown to the favoured Apostles, which evoked St. Peter's exclamations of ecstatic delight. But the Apocalypse gives us the promise of a yet higher and more abiding bliss: "Behold the tabernacle of God with men, and He will dwell with them" (xxi. 2). While we wait here in humble hope of this bliss hereafter, we may, at intervals of brief blessedness, in

some sort participate in the sweetness of those happy privileges of the past, and almost anticipate the greater and abiding future Heavenly joy, by visits to the Blessed Sacrament and our permitted proximity to JESUS in the Tabernacle. How greatly must that Divine Friend, "Faithful and True," desire that we should visit Him in the Prison of His Love! In silence, in loneliness, for long, long hours He is content to await our coming. He waits for us longer than He waited by the wayside well of Jacob, longer than He waited on the Cross of Calvary. He has invited us His friends to visit Him. "Come to Me, all ye who are weary and heavy-laden." He means us, for this is what we are: our hearts are sad, weary, and sin-laden; to visit Him is to find the promised rest. He waits there in the tabernacle—so humbly, so patiently, so mercifully, so lovingly, so sweetly—waiting for those of us who once were so reverent, so frequent in our visits, and are now so cold, so often missing—watching the dear hearts who count the hours till to-morrow's Mass; watching the little children whose greatest pleasure is to be in His presence, of which they seem surprisingly conscious, until we remember His words: "Suffer children to come to Me," until we call to mind that He embraced them, laid His

hands upon them, and blessed them (Mark x. 16). No doubt He still reveals Himself to little ones, and as He sees them looks forward to their First Communion Day, which will be a joy to Himself as well as to these Happy Innocents. We do not forget that adoring Angels are ever near the tabernacles, worshipping their Hidden God. To them, as to ourselves, He is hidden by the Sacramental species, yet He receives and rewards their worship. This we feel is so, while we also feel that we may think He listens most intently to our human voices singing to Him, praying to Him. The Bread of Angels belongs to us rather than to Angels here in our churches, and it is to the voice of our petition that His ears are attentive. In support of these words, it may be mentioned that Viva and other theologians hold the opinion that JESUS in the Blessed Sacrament does not deprive Himself of the use of His bodily senses, in spite of the apparent death-like state in which His Sacramental Life is passed.

Of old, the Psalmist sang that the heavens were telling the glory of God; now it is the earth that does this, and in a more marvellous way. Do not look up to heaven to count its stars, like Abraham in Mambre, but look on the face of the earth, and count the myriads of sanc-

tuary lamps which declare His Presence. In the shape of Hosts of snowflake whiteness the Flower of the Field, the Lily of the Valley, appears in our land. The Almighty pleaded reasons why He should spare Ninive; surely, the protection of London, and many and many a sinful city, is due to the presence of JESUS in the tabernacles of His altars. Disasters are averted, privileges are accorded, and the legions of Angels who unasked now guard His Royal Tents, keep far from us the powers of darkness.

Compared to the crowd of strangers who throng—the Oratory, for instance, what a handful, what a little flock it is that comes to make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament! The pictures, statues, marbles are duly inspected and fully admired; but He to whom it all belongs, whose House it is, is disregarded and ignored by the majority of those who visit the church; or else His Presence is acknowledged—is seen to be acknowledged—in such company by a hurried, stealthy kind of genuflexion which betrays the disgraceful fact that a Catholic is ashamed to practise his religion in the presence of non-Catholics! "He that shall be ashamed of Me in this adulterous and wicked generation, the Son of man also will be ashamed of him, when He shall come in the

glory of His Father with the holy Angels" (Mark viii.). But meanwhile, may He be for ever blessed in the Most Holy Sacrament! JESUS is all gentleness and meekness towards friend and foe alike, and to many a one in these moving crowds grace goes out from Him, and not in vain.

Visit the Blessed Sacrament, and frequently; a daily visit would be none too often. Think of the world and its shows and attractions, its streets and shops, its galleries and gardens, its theatres, and contrast the multitudes who are to be found there with the few who "turn aside" to spend some brief moments with the Lord God of Heaven and earth.

Visit JESUS in the Blessed Sacrament whilst you can—"before the time of affliction come, and the years draw nigh of which thou shalt say, They please me not" (Eccles. xii. 1), before feebleness and sickness make you in turn a prisoner! Ah, then you will reap the reward for the Visits you now make to this Prisoner of Divine Love! The visit of His *friend* will be returned by the Friend of friends, and He will come to your abode. Oh, blissful Holy Viaticum! "Through the bowels of the mercy of our God, in which the Orient from on high hath visited us; to enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death: to

direct our feet into the way of peace" (Luke i. 78). You will say: "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof!" Lord JESUS, receive my soul! And JESUS, your Friend, will "refresh you," and give you Eternal Rest.

# PART III

## SOME THOUGHTS FOR EACH DAY DURING THE OCTAVE OF CORPUS DOMINI

1. THURSDAY: THE FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI
2. FRIDAY: "HE LOVED THEM TO THE END"
3. SATURDAY: "DO THIS FOR A COMMEMORATION OF ME"
4. SUNDAY: "HE THAT EATETH MY FLESH SHALL LIVE FOR EVER"
5. MONDAY: THE LIFE OF JESUS IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT
6. TUESDAY: THE LIFE OF JESUS IN THE BLESSED SACRAMENT
7. WEDNESDAY: THE ASCENSION AND THE BLESSED SACRAMENT
8. THURSDAY: ST. PHILIP'S DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

## SOME THOUGHTS FOR EACH DAY DURING THE OCTAVE OF CORPUS DOMINI

### THURSDAY : THE FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI.

We will exult and rejoice in Thee.—CANT. i. 1.

WITH tongues that have tasted the sweetness of the Lord, with lips wet and red with the Most Precious Blood of JESUS, let us bless and praise Him, and exult and rejoice in Him. No Seraph need come from Heaven this day to purify these lips of ours with burning coal, for every church is thronged with Angels and men all filled with ardent love—ardent enough to set the coldest heart on fire, and make the rudest tongue eloquent. Dear guests at the Royal Banquet, dear Communicants! the devotion on every face seems an answer to the *Lauda Sion :*

" Quantum potes, tantum aude,
Quia major omni laude,
Nec laudare sufficis."

(Tell thy love in boldest phrases,
He is greater than all praises,
They can never equal Him !)

For what is this day? It is the Feast for which we have waited so impatiently ever since Maundy Thursday, the Feast of Corpus Christi, of the Blessed Sacrament. And how shall I say what the Blessed Sacrament is? Oh, there are three giving testimony on earth this day, three voices speak within our hearts. The voice of Faith declares: It is CHRIST, the Son of the Living God. The voice of Hope, which in every trustful heart is but the echo of the voice of JESUS Himself: "He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood shall live for ever." Hope's voice calls out: It is the Life-giving Body and Blood of CHRIST. What says the voice of Charity? Behold, the heart is speechless! It sees, it feels, it knows that the Blessed Sacrament is JESUS, the God who has loved us to the end; swooning and dissolved in gratitude, it rests silently where rested the head of the disciple whom JESUS loved—"Silebit in dilectione sua" (Soph. iii. 17). But why recall the past when the present more than suffices? Why listen for the echo when He that spoke is Himself with us to celebrate His Feast? "Oh, how sweet, Lord, is Thy Spirit, who, to show Thy tenderness for Thy children, with most delicious Bread brought down from Heaven dost fill the hungry with good things, sending away the disdainful rich!"

Come, let us exult and praise Him for ever! Let us bless the Eternal Father for sending Him into the world. Let us bless Himself for descending so meekly, so obediently at the voice of any priest. Let us bless the Holy Ghost, from whom come the stupendous powers of our priesthood. And let us bless the great Mother of God, who gave to Him in her virginal womb that Flesh and Blood with which He feeds our souls. We will exult and rejoice. There is to be no sadness, dear friends of the Bridegroom—He is here! Joy, triumph, gladness must exclude every other feeling. It must be *Lauda Sion* all day long from first to last!

The Church decks herself this day in her richest robes. It is the Coronation Day of her King, the Wedding Day of her Spouse, the Birthday of His Sacramental Life that she is keeping with her children. Therefore have there been rejoicings over all the earth. In village and town, in valley, mountain, forest, the festival is kept. In cities, garrison and seminary have alike paid homage to the King of Kings. Bells of churches, cannon of citadels, ships gaily dressed with festive flags and firing royal salutes—all mingle with the music of martial bands and the chanted hymns and psalms of this Day's Processions.

Glorious indeed are these triumphal processions, for in them Our Lord and God permits Himself to be upborne, and consents to receive our exultant worship. There is no Transfiguration: JESUS in the Sacred Host appears the same as when we receive Him in Holy Communion, yet we know well that it is the "King of ages, Immortal and Invisible," the same JESUS, whether borne by His Vicar "around St. Peter's Square," or by a country priest winding through the cornfields and vineyards of his humble parish, or by the chaplain round some convent's little garden—It is everywhere the one only Saviour, living, looking, listening, loving; in truth, veiled and concealed beneath a thin disguise—which to Faith is none—but substantially not deprived of the vigour and freshness of His unfading manhood, nor of the majesty and glory of His Divinity. O Holy Catholic Church! "Rejoice greatly: Behold thy King comes to thee, the Just and Saviour! Hosanna in excelsis!"

What is the world about to-day? What attitude does it assume? Does it in some places show enmity, in others indifference, in others, perchance, a prudent reverence? Likely enough! Poor thing, we hardly think of it at all. Let it go! *We* have the blessing,

the birthright, we have been "established with the Corn and Wine" (Gen. xxvii. 37). It is not from the world that JESUS looks to receive welcome and worship this day. Now as ever "His Kingdom is not of this world." It is to us He comes, to a royal priesthood, a priestly people. Little, indeed, are our small churches for a kingdom, few are we for subjects; but He is well pleased to quit His tabernacle and with meek and lowly pomp pass through our midst. How are we to acclaim and greet Him? Well, banish all fear: "It is I, be not afraid." We know His joy and content to be with His "little flock," however small. "Two or three gathered in His Name" are enough! It is JESUS, unchanged, the same. All His experiences of Sacramental Life have not made Him repent His Gift. It is the same JESUS who, when He saw the cornfields ripe for the harvest, went on to think of the unleavened bread which He would change into His Flesh, who at the sight of vineyards and their clustering grapes thought of the wine-press of the Passion, of the Precious Blood in the chalice shed for the remission of sins. Knowingly and lovingly, then, He comes to His own. How to receive Him? In other lands they hang their tapestries from wall and balcony, they make triumphal arches across the streets,

they weave garlands and wreaths of choicest flowers, light up the windows with lamp and taper all along the course of the procession. And so it once was in our own country. By our forefathers Our Lord was acknowledged King of kings. On this Feast He went in beautiful procession across England's fields and meadows, through winding lanes whose hedges were covered with fragrant may-thorn blossom, round churches with their stately yews. He was escorted through great cities by the sovereigns of this realm, vassals of their Sacramental Lord and King. All this is lost, yet not hopelessly, we trust, though at present it is much if the processions can take place in the private grounds of colleges and convent schools. These are days of disbelief. It is quite likely that at any service two may be side by side, one an exile from his own country, but with the faith of his fathers preserved inviolate, go where he may; the other in his own native land, but without the faith of his forefathers. The one is triumphant, for he has that faith " which overcometh the world "; the other is but a slave to that world, for he is without the supernatural weapons necessary to fight and resist the world. One is bright and happy, for he knows his Lord " in the breaking of bread," and his heart burns within

him as JESUS passes: hidden though is his God, the disciple knows Him and says: "It is the Lord." The stranger beside him sits sad and silent, somewhat moody, somewhat afraid, almost angry at feeling so out of place. Let us not blame him; he is to be forgiven; he knows not what he does; his ignorance and want of faith is not of his choosing, in him it is an original sin for which schismatical England is to blame. If he is disposed to seek instruction, unless it is to us that he applies, he is likely to be driven wild by the senseless ravings of innumerable sects which are fast making the population of England look like the inmates of a veritable lunatic asylum of infidelity. Let us ever pray for him and all such separated brethren!

Poor London! It has not noticed this Day, although the Feast is noted in its almanacs. In the heart of this unfortunate city, full of captive churches, melancholy in their desecration and desolation, Faith, Hope, and Charity find little or no room. Speak to the inhabitants of the Feast of to-day, the vast majority would not listen. Rich and poor alike are indifferent—the rich worldly in amusements, the poor worldly in work and toil. Those who are not of the Mystical Body of Christ deny the Body of Christ in the Blessed Sacra-

ment, as they so often deprive themselves of the Christian's Crucifix, content with the Cross alone without that Sacred Body which gave it all its worth.

But we do not need to think of the gloom and sadness of those outside the Church in order to increase our own content and happiness. Could we ever while still on earth be happier than we are to-day? We wanted to thank God as we never before have thanked Him—and JESUS offered Himself for our intention in the Holy Mass. We wanted to exult and rejoice exceedingly—and JESUS allowed us to carry Him in triumphal procession, a veritable outburst of holy happiness. And our dearest Lord—Alpha and Omega—ends the Festival with a beautiful and gracious Benediction!

Our own Father St. Philip, as though in reward for having urged men to love the Blessed Sacrament more and more, was summoned to Heaven upon the Feast of Corpus Christi. May the same Body of Our Lord JESUS CHRIST conduct us also to eternal life! May we there with Philip offer "Benediction, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, honour and power, and strength to our God for ever and ever. Amen." "After this I saw a great multitude, which no man could

number, of all nations, and tribes, and people, and tongues, standing before the throne, and in the sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands: and they cried with a loud voice, saying: Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb " (Apoc. vii. 9).

### Friday within the Octave.

Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.—St. John xiii.

Holy Communion is ever delightful, ever to be longed for. What joy to hear the words: You may go to Communion! What rapturous joy to receive the Word made Flesh, to be able to say with St. John: That which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled; and we ourselves may add: and our hearts have feasted on! What could we have done without the Blessed Sacrament, seeing that these our hearts so pine for this Heavenly Comfort? *Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea ad Te Deus!*

Any preparation is suitable, any thanksgiving will do. Love, and do what you will—love, and *say* what you will! How many are content to rest sweetly in the Five Sacred

Wounds, saying: "Hide me within Thy Wounds!" Yes, like bees they drink the sweetness of devotion from those Five Flowers of the Passion! They speak with their JESUS of it, of the patience and constancy which He displayed, of the pity and compassion they feel, and the grief which is theirs because it was their sins that caused His sufferings.

Let us think of yet another way in which to entertain Our Lord when Holy Communion makes Him our Guest. The Passion, even that, was not the end of the love of JESUS for us. He loved us more than that. In the Blessed Sacrament there is something sweeter than even the Five Wounds! Ah, they guide us to something further; they are channels to something deeper; by them "man shall approach to a deep Heart"—they admit us to the Home of Love, to the Sacred Heart! From those Five Wounds issue the living waters, the streams of life and happiness sent from Eternal Love. They met together in that Sacred Heart which now like a fountain spreads them in sparkling showers over the garden of our soul. Those Wounds give forth the flashing flames of the fires of Divine love which glow as glows a furnace. They release some of the intense heat of the Sacred Heart which in every Tabernacle burns with love of us!

Well then, let us sometimes, when we receive Our Lord, inflame our poor hearts with this thought—that the Communion we are making is that in us which gives a supreme satisfaction to the Sacred Heart. And let us learn that the love of our hearts should likewise tend to, and finally find its tranquil rest in Holy Communion.

He must indeed love us utterly, to the end, since He makes Himself our Food! "I have compassion on the multitude. . . . If I shall send them away fasting to their home, they will faint by the way, for some of them came from afar" (St. Mark viii.). Yea, Lord, some of us are come from afar, "from a far country, where we wasted our substance, and perished with hunger" (St. Luke xv.). We heard Thy Voice, "Come to Me all ye that labour," and are come to throw ourselves upon Thy tender Mercy and Compassion! Thou hast a welcome for all—for the poor, the sick, the blind, the lame; and if they cannot come to Thee, then Thou in Thy pity dost go to them to heal them or to be the Viaticum of their last journey! Some may be startled to see kneeling at the altar-rail one whom perhaps quite recently they knew in the evil plight of sin. Granted, but he has washed his robe in the Blood of the Lamb, he has received the Wed-

ding Garment: "This thy brother was dead, and is come to life again; he was lost, and is found." If they wonder, let them still more wonder that they themselves, are there, let them call to mind what that Indulgent JESUS has Himself said of His Sacred Heart: I am meek and humble of Heart. It is to that meek and humble Heart our thanks must be given, when Holy Communion brings to us a JESUS so patient, so loving, so sweet, so generous, so compassionate!

Have we not sometimes wished that some Seraph would come, and with a burning coal inflame our lips and heart to praise and love aright? Yes, but a priest has often come and placed a Living, a "Consuming Fire" upon these poor lips of ours. Ah, St. Philip burned; his face flashed flame; St. Francis, Xavier was all on fire—Why, why are we so cold? Would that we might be taken into the very centre of that burning Heart of JESUS, even as the Three Children were cast into the furnace! There, only there, can we hope worthily to bless and love Him; there would we be content to die for love of Him who has loved us to the end!

## Saturday within the Octave.

(*Mostly a paraphrase of St. Bonaventure, Sermon* vi., *De Cœna Domini.*)

Do this for a commemoration of Me.—St. Luke xxii. 19.

Love does not tolerate forgetfulness. Our Lord would be remembered by us every day, even as He would lovingly give us the Blessed Sacrament as our Daily Bread. Those who hear daily Mass should never weary of meditations upon the Holy Eucharist; for there can hardly be sense of sameness in dealing with that which is so sweet. " His branches shall spread, and his glory shall be as the olive-tree: and his fragrance as that of Libanus. They shall be converted that sit under his shadow; *they shall live upon wheat,* and they shall blossom as the vine: his Memorial shall be as the wine of Libanus " (Osee xiv.).

And in seasons of distress and danger—when the soul is as a prisoner in the lions' den of wild passions and evil inclinations—even as Daniel received the " broken bread " brought by the prophet (Dan. xiv. 32), so do we receive the Blessed Sacrament, given to sustain and strengthen us in hours of peril.

When, repulsed by earthly friends, far distant from Heavenly home, way-worn and

weary, faint and disheartened, we sink down in the desert and for very sadness would sleep, " arise and eat " is whispered, and we find that the desert of life is not impassible, that " in the strength of the Bread " we can endure its loneliness, its aridity, and walk even to the mount of God (3 Kings xix. 8).

When the Tents of Madian, these rebellious, restless senses of ours, beleaguer the poor soul with their fretful suggestions and contradictions, we cry out: *Bella premunt hostilia, Da robur fer auxilium !* and help comes from the SALUTARIS HOSTIA. This is the " Hearth-cake " of which Gideon heard in the telling of the soldier's dream—the hearth-cake which, rolling down, struck the tent of the enemy, and beat it flat to the ground (Judg. vii. 13).

This is the " Bread of fine flour " with which, according to Ezechiel, God feeds and makes the soul " exceedingly beautiful," inconstant and faithless though she may afterwards become (Ezec. xvi. 13).

This is the bread given by the poor man of Nathan's parable to his " one little ewe-lamb " (2 Kings xii. 3). Our Lord is well represented by the poor man who has but the one sheep, while the prince of this world has countless flocks, multitudes of souls possessed by him and driven unresisting down the broad way that

leads to destruction. Ah, CHRIST bought His sheep "at a great price"; and when it was lost He sought it, and He carried it gently and tenderly upon His own kind shoulder, and "it was to Him as a daughter"; and He said to Peter: "Feed My sheep, feed My lambs." Peter feeds us as he himself was fed by his Divine Master, and in commemoration we are given the Living Bread come down from Heaven, we eat the Flesh and drink the Blood of the Lamb of God. May He have mercy on us, and give us peace!

It is right to remember, it is sweet to think of, that hour of love and sorrow when JESUS consoled and comforted His poor friends, His own whom He so loved, with this farewell Heavenly Banquet, which with desire He had desired to celebrate before He suffered. It will also be well to look forward to what God has prepared in Heaven for those who love Him, but we must bear in mind the warning of St. Paul. We have seen the Good Shepherd, though bleeding, bend over us, though wounded, releasing us, bearing us and our iniquities which brought Him to His death. Now let us look up, and behold the Good Shepherd on the everlasting hills, in the fair meadows and ever-verdant lawns of Paradise. Is it the lamb of the Baptist that He is caressing there? Nay,

rather it is the sheep that was lost and now is found. It is the pet of the Poor Man that here below ate of His Bread and drank of His Chalice! What does it now? It feeds upon the entrancing beauty of His Humanity, and it sleeps in the merciful bosom of His loving Divinity!

## Sunday within the Octave: The Great Supper.

He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up in the last day.—St. John vi. 55.

Earthly life is haunted by the fear of death. As a hawk terrifies the timid bird which he shadows and hunts on the hillside, so death alarms mankind, his lawful prey whom he relentlessly pursues. The more refined, educated, artistic, or scientific men become the greater seems their dislike and fear of death. Of course I mean those who are "without hope," because they are without religion. Their number is too great to allow us to forget them or ignore them, though it is not likely that they would condescend to even open the present volume. Let us pass on to lessons which we also require, and which may help those of us who in submission to the Divine

Decree accept death, but with a natural repugnance of which resignation does not rid them. It is the simple-hearted poor who are bravest and best-behaved when pale Death draws near. While they will lie down to die without question or complaint, the rich make endless protests and efforts to evade their inevitable doom. While the educated and cultured try all resources to avoid one ache or pain, the hardy child of nature makes us blush at his patience under suffering—patience which we admire but cannot imitate. We are too soft and effeminate, too wanting in the spirit of mortification, to submit readily to our enjoined penance and "accept death as a punishment justly due to our sins." Many complain of the tedious weariness of life; but that which makes life unpleasant to them is not toil, nor want, nor loneliness, nor sickness, but the apprehension of the nearer and nearer approach of death, and the possibility that he may be even now within striking distance.

It would be mere arrogance to stigmatize as fear and cowardice our natural repugnance to dissolution, to the severance of soul and body, however gently brought about. Death is the appointed, universal punishment of mankind—truly a terrible punishment to be undergone by all in consequence of the sin of

one, the Founder of the human race. But it is not the prospect of the actual pain and agony of dying that makes men fear death, nor even that which follows—the Judgment; what they fear is departure from this world and its certainties, separation from the life, and the food, and the sleep, and the pleasures, and the companions, and all else to which at all costs we are accustomed and attached. "Doth bitter death thus separate?" said Agag, fat and trembling. It was the separation that made the bitterness of death. No remorse for sin in the past, no prayer for safety in the future—only regret at leaving this world filled the mind of the unhappy wretch whom Samuel cut to pieces before the Lord (1 Kings xv. 33).

And yet reason alone sufficiently reproves our cowardly clinging to this world, our unreadiness to follow those who are gone before and await us. Reason bids man give heed to his instinctive craving for immortality, and in all content dispose himself to make the profitable exchange of mortal life for life that is everlasting. With those who are not reasonable, who assert without a spark of evidence that there is no other world, who deny that there is a future life, who maintain that, though the body lasts after death in the shape of dust, the spirit does not return to God who gave

it, but is extinguished by instantaneous annihilation—with these mental nihilists even remonstrance would here be out of place and, alas ! quite useless. It is those who do believe that are now addressed, who believe " in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting," an Article of the Creed to which we yield the readiest assent. This Faith of ours tells us of another world, a future life, a Home of homes, where shall be no more sorrow, sickness, or death, where we shall see our Heavenly Father, when " the former things are passed away " and God shall wipe away all tears. Hope adds her voice, and gives glowing accounts of the bounty, the goodness, the fidelity of God to all His promises; she describes the glories of that Heavenly Kingdom, that City where Saints and Angels dwell together " in a multitude of peace." We Christians listen to it all, believe it all, and yet act with unaccountable folly and perversity. We are called, we are invited to prepare for that Kingdom; we are warned that it " suffers violence "; we are urged to win it at all costs; spiritual and even sacramental assistance is pressed upon us; but we make excuses and plead more engrossing engagements. Farms, oxen, wives—all, as predicted by Our Lord, are still thought of sufficient consequence to require our whole

interest, to make us " mind earthly things," and risk the loss of our soul. " What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world ?" " Bitter death " will soon separate him from the unstable possessions, the fleeting joys and pleasures for which he has exchanged his soul !

How happy is the choice of the Parable of the Great Supper for the Gospel on the Sunday within the Octave of Corpus Christi ! The Church invites her children to the Sacrum Convivium, the Heavenly Banquet, and warns us not to treat the Mystery of Faith with neglect and indifference such as that which Our Lord described in His parable. Well said one who sat at table with Him: " Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God !" True, yet Our Saviour warned the speaker that not a few would behave unworthily and refuse the Gift of God. Of such may we never be ! Blessed is he who shall eat the Living Bread come down from Heaven, who shall owe his immortality to the life-giving properties of this Divine Bread ! Our Lord Himself has said it: " The Bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world "; " He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up in the last day " (John vi. 55). Such are the solemn words of " the Resurrection and the Life."

His truth shall enlighten our mind, His Precious Blood by sacramental signs and words shall make our heart clean, and His Flesh shall so vitalize our own that to eat It shall be to gain an antidote to the deadliness of death and the corruption of the grave. For a moment " the body of this death " succumbs. It is well: we would wish the sin-stained body to be subjected, not to destruction, but to purification of the most complete kind. We would wish that every particle of which we ever made wrong use, or dishonoured by sinful degradation, should be searched, and cleansed, and purified by the action of every element, while the consecrating effect of its union with the Divine Flesh of JESUS will preserve it from perishing in the process, and bring it forth in all the beauty and everlasting health of a spiritual body. To this does Our Lord pledge His word, this He will accomplish by His own Omnipotence. " All flesh shall see the glory of the Lord." The Living Bread, the Blessed Sacrament, shall be laid as a Seal upon all humanity by the Communions of the Faithful. *Quare tristis es anima mea, et quare conturbas me? Cor meum et caro mea exultaverunt in Deum Verum.*

Let us, then, respond to a Love that is stronger than death, and hasten to the Supper of the Lamb of God.

MONDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE: THE LIFE OF JESUS IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT—I.

Mysterious and incomprehensible is the manner in which Our Lord enters on His Sacramental Life, and the mode in which He maintains His Sacramental Presence: and His motive for performing this perpetual miracle is as mysterious and incomprehensible. For, although we know what His motive is which induces Him to live a life like this—" Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end "—it is love, simply and only love—the mystery remains, the mystery that He does love us, and to such an extent. The love that declares and proves itself in so marvellous a way is itself a Mystery of Faith.

The soul, contemplating her beautiful Beloved, in a very trance of joy and rapture, like that of St. Peter on Mount Tabor, like him not knowing what she says, calls out: Ah, St. John, thou didst to our envy lean upon His bosom, but even there wast unable to comprehend how He can enter thine and mine ! Look, my Lord, look, my Love, from Thy veil look on Thyself unveiled ! Thou, that art held, on Thyself, the Holder, look ! Thou that art Meat and Drink, on Thyself the Giver, look ! Thou

that art Love, on Thyself the Lover, Thou shalt not see in Heaven nor on earth One so dear, so fair, so beautiful as Thine own sweet Self!

For, on the eve of death JESUS does more than die—He begins a Sacramental Life. Out of the resources of His wisdom and power, out of the inexhaustible riches of His Supreme Goodness, out of the incredible condescension and excess of His love, He contrives and procures and bestows on Himself this new and miraculous mode of existence. From their accidents or sensible appearances He separates the naturally inseparable substances of bread and wine, and converts or changes the invisible substances into the Substance of His own Body and Blood. Thus, at one and the same time He is clothed in glory and enwrapt by the consecrated species, in Heaven is seen of Saints and Angels, here is wholly invisible—there King of Kings, here our Fellow-exile, a Prisoner condemned by His own love to a Sacramental cell—there, at the right hand of the Father, here, "as a stranger and a wayfaring man turning aside to rest!" Not two Christs but One and the Same, present simultaneously in many places, with a multiplicity which seems like a participation in the Divine Ubiquity! It is the Mystery of Faith, the Miracle of Divine Love!

" Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end," and gave them power to do this in commemoration of Him. It was not a solitary, isolated act of love to which He limited Himself, it was the beginning of the Life of Love that He meant to lead; it was the fulfilment of prophecy: " From the rising of the sun even to the going down, My Name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My Name a clean oblation " (Mal. i. 11). The Prophet Zacharias also said: " Holy stones shall be lifted up over His land. For what is the good thing of Him, and what is His beautiful thing, but the corn of the elect and wine springing forth virgins ?" (Zach. ix. 17). Even to the consummation of the world will He live this Sacramental Life.

The natural life of the God-Man has its history, its Gospel; the supernatural life of the God-Host admits of a history, a Gospel. Both lives, both Gospels, may be expressed in one word—Love. Yet each detail of the visible life of JESUS detains us by its sweetness as we meditate, and in like manner we discover in meditation a thousand beauties and marvels in this invisible life led by Our Lord amongst us. We know Him to be ever the same—" JESUS CHRIST yesterday, to-day, the Same for ever "—

so it is easy as it is delightful to tell the life of JESUS in the Blessed Sacrament. It is a repetition of the Gospel. We have an Annunciation, a Visitation, a Birth—in short, a Hidden Life. We have a Heavenly Samaritan, a Good Shepherd—in short, a Three Years' Ministry. We have a painless Passion, an Unbloody Sacrifice, a Mystical Death. And we, as well as St. Mary Magdalen and St. Thomas, may touch and handle the Glorified Body of Our Lord and God.

" Verily Thou art a Hidden God, the God of Israel the Saviour " (Isa. xlv. 15)—nowhere more hidden than in the Holy Eucharist! When the Splendour of the Father, the Figure of His substance assumed our nature and substance, it was beneath the overshadowing of the Most High, in the secret sealed chamber, the inviolate womb of the Spotless Virgin's Heart. " Behold the handmaid of the Lord !" Mary consented that within her blessed womb there should be woven for the Word by the Holy Ghost a garment of sinless flesh. Secretly and unseen the Angel Gabriel came and departed: and it was long ere even St. Joseph learned the mystery, so hidden is God. And now see the manner of the new and Sacramental Annunciation. At the altar each morning there stands a priest of God, unthought

of by the world as was Mary of Nazareth. "Receive the Holy Ghost" has been said to him; by the imposition of hands did the power of the Most High pass into him. Mary, my Mother, how shall I write it? He, too, poor sinner, speaks words like thine, words potent as when pronounced by his Divine Master. The Holy Ghost is there; the words are not in vain: "THIS IS MY BODY," he affirms. Forthwith he has given to JESUS a place in our midst, he has given to JESUS another mode of existence and a consecrated white garment, beneath which, in the Mystery of Faith, He may conceal the beauty of His Manhood and the glory of His Godhead, glory which we cannot gaze upon and live. This morning the night withdrew, the mists rolled away, the flowers opened, and the birds broke forth in song, because the sun arose. "Behold a Man, the Orient is His Name" (Zach. vi. 12). Behold a God, "the Orient from on high hath visited us" (Luke i. 78), but few besides the priest and the Angels gave Him a welcome. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not"—such were the sad words with which that priest finished his lonely Mass. Or perchance, some did receive their Saviour, others consumed with him the Victim of that Sacrifice. May their hearts have been hot and burning with

adoring love—the Stable of Bethlehem was cold and bleak!

Thus is renewed in our midst the Hidden Life. Here, is He adored by the Poor, who approach fearlessly as did the Shepherds. Here, is He found by those few among the rich who, like the Three Kings guided by Faith, seek for Him without whom they confess they can do nothing. Here, hidden as in Egypt, He lingers secretly in the midst of so many enemies. But the idols are slow to fall! Here, in the silence of His Infancy, in the obedience of His Childhood, in the obscurity of His Youth, does the Eternal dwell. Why? For love of us, for our sake.

It is easy to perform acts of virtue which lend themselves to display and credit, easy also to do deeds that exhibit generosity or courage, but does not this meditation of ours make us feel that there must be more than we have hitherto imagined to please God in the hidden, silent, humble virtues of home and a lowly state of life? The Earthly Trinity dwelt in a cottage not better than most of our homes, the God we adore is before us. Judge how poorly He is housed! We see Him often, "White as white wool and as snow," least in the Kingdom of Heaven, littlest of all in church! Love Him, serve Him, visit Him—He deserves all this and more. "CHRIST JESUS, who, being in

the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the Cross. For which cause God also hath exalted Him, and hath given a Name that is above all names, that in the Name of JESUS every knee should bow, of those that are in Heaven, on earth, and under the earth" (Phil. ii. 10).

Thus did His Father reward that meek obedience; then much more here and now let every knee be bent, and every heart adore JESUS in the Most Holy Sacrament, with praise and gratitude because of the yet greater, meeker obedience which He yields to us. For at the call of Consecration the Bread of Life descends, the Heavenly Manna falls like a snow-flake, and lies motionless almost at our feet!

### TUESDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE: THE LIFE OF JESUS IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT—II.

Nazareth detained JESUS many years by the sweetness of its subjection, and the delight of being with Mary and Joseph, those holiest and dearest among the children of men. But at last Our Lord left the Holy House of His

Mother, that abode of peace and concealment! He chose to dwell in Capharnaum on the sea-coast, and went about all Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and infirmity. This ministry lasted three years, and constituted the Public Life of JESUS.

Wherever Our Lord is now in Sacramental Presence, in every church where He has His tabernacle, He works as He worked of old: "My Father worketh till now, and I work" (John v. 17). He works in the same manner as the Father has ever worked, in secret and hidden ways. It was so in Galilee, it was so in Judea; it will be so in Christendom to the end. He worked in secret, He avoided notice, imposed silence, charging those He healed to "tell no man"; He shunned popularity, He refused to gratify the inquisitiveness, the curiosity of the sceptical and scornful, as when He put forth the crowd from the house of Jairus; He cured the sick, yet waited not to be thanked; He gave sight to the blind, yet stayed not to be seen. The work of His Father, in which Our Lord shares as One with Him, is secret, silent, invisible. Which of us can detect the Divine Presence of the God whose living breath gave us life, and now sustains us so that "in Him we live and move and have

our being" ? Thus was it with the Presence of the Word made Flesh in Galilee, in Judea. How few knew of it, felt it, suspected it ! Was Rome aware of it ? Did her emperors in their palace take cognizance of it ? Was there even a moment's pause in the world's occupations or amusements in order to consider how to act in consequence of the arrival and dwelling of God among us ? When the Three Kings from the East brought the news there was, it is true, some excitement and trouble at Jerusalem, but it soon ended. Herod took his atrocious measures of defence, and the Word made Flesh was ignored by the world—" the world knew Him not." Still, the unknown God had doubtless a mysterious if unseen influence on the earth when He descended from Heaven. Unrecorded, yet not unfelt, acts of His Divine Goodness abounded, " which, if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written " (John xxi. 25). Whilst the Saviour was in the desert and with the wild beasts, He knew those who were in the villages and cities, knew each and all, and was ready to die for men who were utterly unconscious of His love and care for them.

As then so it is now. The Blessed Sacrament is that same adorable JESUS. He an-

nounces not Himself; He leaves to others to say: "Behold the Lamb of God!" He lives and reigns in the churches of cities, in country chapels, in chapels of lonely monasteries deep in forest gloom, in chapels built on the cliff, looking out on the sea, His ocean creature on whose waves He walked, whose tempests He rebuked —He is there, at hand to help the sinking. He rules over wastes of water and realms of land, though He rarely gives outward token that His endless Kingdom is established, and that He, the King of Ages, is reigning in our midst. The crowds who flock into our churches to admire the loveliness of His tabernacles experience something which they do not understand. It is the sacred spell of His unseen Presence, of His unsuspected nearness, of His looking on them as He looked on Peter. His Father worketh until now, and He also works, but works like the Father behind the screen of matter, giving the inward grace concealed within an outward sign. Even His friends and children see Him not, nor do the Angels themselves, so Hidden is He in the Mystery of Faith. In Communion, in Viaticum, they "taste and see the sweetness of the Lord." In the strength of that Bread they accomplish their last journey, and bravely tread the aërial mountain path which conducts to our Heavenly

Home. But the hidden deeds of our Hidden God—His deeds of mercy, of healing, of enlightenment, of pardoning, of strengthening—no one can describe or enumerate. Were all written, the whole world would not be able to contain the books.

JESUS not only lives in the Blessed Sacrament, He also dies there—dies a mystical, painless death of sacrifice and love. The Cross of Calvary is not used, but the altars we erect are chosen by our Victim for His Eucharistic Sacrifice. The sacred vestments, the ceremonies, the separate consecration of the Species recall the cruel Passion and Crucifixion, but only so as to appeal to our gratitude, rather than to excite grief and revive horror at what the hands of sinners accomplished upon Calvary.

True, hands of sinners still hold the Sacred Victim, but He suffers no real and actual pain. The Lamb of God is mystically slain, and we speak of the Body of Christ—so deathlike are the Sacramental conditions to which He submits—but, God be praised! the Sacred Heart throbs, the Divine pulses beat with beatific life that flows perpetually with the Precious Blood in our Saviour's glorified veins. True it is also, alas! that sacrilegious sins against the Blessed Sacrament are too often committed, sins rivalling and even surpassing the hateful malice

of the Jews; and so in a certain sense through these foreseen sins the Passion is repeated and the Son of God is crucified again. Except to move our hearts to reparation, to astonishment at the Divine patience of the Victim, who as before holds His peace and opens not His mouth to reproach mankind, I would not mention in these pages for devout souls offences so terrible, which make the Most Holy more than the Memorial of the Passion.

What the Crucifix is to the Past that is the Blessed Sacrament to the Future. It is the Pledge of Paradise. In the Resurrection the Soul of Christ bathed with the unimpeded joy of the Beatific Vision, the Body of Christ glorified and beautiful exceedingly with its five resplendent Wounds, cast away the restraints of mortality. The shroud, the linen cloth, and napkin were laid aside, and miraculous disguises hid the garment of glory in which Our Lord was clad. During the three-and-thirty years of His mortal life Our Saviour had suspended the enjoyment of the gladness and prerogatives due to His Sacred Humanity because of the Hypostatic Union. Such enjoyment would have been incompatible with the sufferings for which He thirsted. If occasionally He exercised His rights and privileges it was for the sake of others, not for His own

pleasure. But during the forty days of His Risen Life joy and gladness inundated the Sacred Heart, and no one checked the swelling waves of that boundless ocean of bliss. Absence from Heaven was no obstacle to His happiness, as His Angels forfeit nothing when away from Heaven with those whom they have in charge. We may well believe that the Apostles participated in their Divine Master's Easter joy, that Nathaniel then saw the "Angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man" (John i. 51); they saw those Eagles of Heaven gather to that Glorified Body in which "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead corporally" (Col. ii. 9). They exulted to find that He, who would not delay when but a Child to set about the business of His Father, hesitated not to postpone for their sake the triumph of His own glory and His enthronement at the right hand of God. They listened to all His words concerning the Kingdom of Heaven; they received His gracious promises of the coming of the Holy Ghost, and of visits from Himself with the Father who also loved them. They went through all this rejoicingly, and even when they saw Him ascend, and the White Cloud receive Him out of their sight, they still gazed in ecstasy, and said their Alleluia of joy and praise. It was easy for

them to rejoice! How well they knew that it would henceforth be in their own priestly power to have and to hold that Body of the Lord as their Heavenly Food, their Life, their Heaven begun on earth! They promised themselves, in eating the spotless Flesh and drinking the Precious Blood of the Lamb of God, foretastes of that Heaven into which their Lord was gone.

Thus has it ever been in the Church of Christ. Souls have in truth longed for Paradise, its rest and peace, but they have appeased these longings with the Bread of Heaven. Faith's soft, sheltering, luminous darkness tempers the splendour of His glory and reveals the beauty of His love; and on that darkness which is His covert, which surrounds the Mystery of Faith, visions of Heaven appear. There "the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth corporally," and we are permitted, like Moses, to gaze on the white raiment, the Sacramental species, the robe of our God. St. John tells us: "We saw His glory, the glory as it were of the Only-begotten of the Father." We can tell St. John that we in turn have also seen, gazing on the Sacred Host have had glimpses of glory, have seen and known the Lord in the Breaking of Bread.

The Presence of JESUS in the Blessed Sacrament, the sight of the Sacred Host, is to the

children of the Church like the Apparitions of JESUS Risen to His disciples, like His being in their midst, His gentle Mother at His side, in the quiet green glades of Galilee; it is a fore-vision of the same Good Shepherd in the ever-verdant lawns of Paradise.

Such is the Life of JESUS in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar. May He be for ever blessed, for ever praised, for ever loved, and the more so because of the salutary manner in which He gives Himself to us. Even as the Father gave Him to the world that He so loved, He who loves us to the end gives Himself to us as the Father gave Him. Hidden yet revealed, still and motionless yet working with Divine energy, living and life-giving yet mystically dead, "as a tender plant and as a root out of a thirsty ground," yet full of glory. Thus is He with us "all days even to the consummation of the world"—JESUS CHRIST yesterday, to-day, and the same for ever!

WEDNESDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE: THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT AND THE ASCENSION.

Earth is no abiding-place for Heaven's inhabitants. What has joy in common with sorrow, light with darkness? How can He who is Light of Light abide in this our dark-

ness? How can He who is *Altissimus* descend to dwell in this our Vale of Tears? The very dove could find no resting-place upon the deluged earth; how can He, the Creator of the Angels, remain and linger here? "If you loved Me, you would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father" (John xiv. 28). It is right, it is meet and just, for His own dear sake, that He should go, to be with His Father, to appear in His glory in the highest Heaven, to receive the adoration of the Angelic hosts. If we love Him we shall indeed be glad.

For our own sake also He departs and leaves us. "It is expedient to you that I go: for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go I will send Him to you" (John xvi. 7). It is expedient to your faith. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed" (John xx. 29). To see JESUS was a blessing—a boon for which kings and prophets had longed, and which they had not obtained; but deprivation of that sweet consolation of His visible presence brings about a still greater blessing: "When the Holy Ghost is come, He will convince the world of sin, because they believed not in Me. And of justice: because I go to the Father; and you shall see Me no longer" (John xvi. 10). The light of My presence shall be lessened, and your faith shall thereby be

exercised; the mustard seed shall grow, and in the midst of the world's sin and unbelief your holiness and fidelity shall convince the world of justice.

It is expedient to your hope. "In My Father's house there are many mansions. If not, I would have told you that I go to prepare a place for you. And if I shall go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will take you to Myself; that where I am, you also may be" (John xiv. 2). "Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid." What trust, what confidence, these consoling, gracious words inspire! *In Te, Domine, speravi: non confundar in æternum.*

It is expedient to your charity. It is well for you that your Treasure should be in Heaven, in order that there also your hearts may be set, that your affections may be lifted from earthly surroundings, your conversation may be in Heaven, that the Spirit of Love may come and enkindle in your hearts ardent love for your absent JESUS, and so more easily carry away your souls to "the things that are above."

At what pains is Our Lord to induce His Apostles to refrain from sadness at His departure! Could He have spoken more kindly and persuasively? And so He leads forth the Little Flock to Olivet. With His Heart He

speaks to His Mother's heart, and again obtains her blessing on His going, though at what a cost to her whose "face is lit with smiles!"[1] For the last time on earth His oft-wearied Feet, beautiful now with their bright Wounds, press the green sward of that peaceful mountain—He stands in their midst, Mother and Brethren around; He looks on them one by one, so searchingly, so lovingly, with such trust, such encouragement, such regret that He cannot take them all with Him. With His Face transfigured, white as snow and brighter than the sun, with His Hands stretched over them, and the five rubied Wounds streaming forth floods of grace and joy and light, He blesses them; He rises in the air, softly and slowly, upborne by His own volition. So long as their eyes can follow and distinguish His fairest features, so long does He let them see that He still gazes upon them. And then, higher and higher ascending into the blue heavens, brighter and brighter and whiter than any Angel, the attitude is changed. They see the Hands and Arms uplifted. Floods of golden light fall on the Face that is raised in search of the Father's. He is past the regions where eagles soar. One final flash, and a white cloud receives Him out of their sight. He is ascended.

[1] Faber.

" Ye men of Galilee, why stand you looking up to Heaven ? This JESUS who is taken up from you into Heaven shall so come as you have seen Him going into Heaven " (Acts i. 11). Dear Angels, how soon and sweetly will your words come true ! Neither they nor we need wait for the world's end for the return of JESUS. The Bread of Life will come down from Heaven, and even in the same manner in which He ascended, the white cloud of the Sacramental Species will conceal Him from our eyes as did the cloud in the heavens on Ascension Day. He will not come in power and majesty till the Judgment Day; but they have only to go back to the Upper Chamber, and there use the power imparted to them by Our Lord, and forthwith He is with them. He does not leave them orphans: St. Peter and the Apostles have now the inexpressible joy of giving JESUS to her who first gave JESUS to the world.

Although invisible and veiled, yet otherwise He comes as He ascended—that is, in glory, in strength, in the attributes of immortality. " The first Adam was made into a living soul; the last Adam into a quickening spirit " (1 Cor. xv. 45). That natural Body, that adorable Flesh, in which " dwells all the fulness of the Godhead corporally," comes with its vivifying graces, its transforming virtue. The

very touch of His garment, the contact with His Sacramental Robe, will quicken us into life. " If then you shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing " (John vi. 64). Therefore St. Paul writes: " God hath quickened us together in Christ, and hath made us sit together in Christ in the Heavenly places " (Eph. ii. 6). The word of Our Lord still stands: " Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me " (John xvii. 24). " Wheresoever the Body shall be, thither will the eagles also be gathered together " (Luke xvii. 37). As the eagle entices her young to fly, hovering over them and guiding their path, so does Christ by the Holy Communion make us heavenly; the Bread of Angels gives our soul ever fresh life and love, and our hearts are there fixed where our true joys are. " Therefore as we have borne the image of the earthly, let us bear also the image of the Heavenly " (1 Cor. xv. 49).

Dear Reader, may the prayer of the priest constantly sound in your ears at the altar-rails: " May the Body of Our Lord JESUS CHRIST preserve thy soul to everlasting life." And be it yours to hear him say, at the last and best of all Communions: " Receive, dearest Brother, the Viaticum of the Body of Our Lord JESUS

CHRIST, that He may preserve thee from the malignant enemy, and bring thee to eternal life."

## END OF THE OCTAVE: ST. PHILIP'S DEVOTION TO THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT

To dwell on the prevalence of vice, on the general decay of piety, is a usual and often, unfortunately, a truthful, though never a pleasant, seldom a necessary, way of praising the especial virtues of a Saint. Thus, before their narrative of St. Philip's extraordinary devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, some writers give sad accounts of a deplorable want of devotion and neglect of the Sacraments on the part of those around him. No doubt things were very bad, but perhaps not quite so bad as many represent. That St. Philip should have been able, without remark and without criticism, to go to Communion every day as a youth and a layman, shows that the neglect of others was from individual tepidity and coldness rather than from any wrong principles or organized opposition, such as the Jansenists made, to frequentation of the Sacraments.

It may well be thought that St. Philip's affection for Savonarola was because this holy Friar—like himself a Florentine—had loved the Blessed Sacrament intensely, and had

induced Florence to elect JESUS in the Blessed Sacrament for her King. It was in his native city that Philip made his First Communion, and began the fervent practice of daily Communion. JESUS in the Blessed Sacrament was more successful with Philip than with the young man of whom we are told in the Gospel. Both were young, both good, both loved by Our Lord; but he of the Gospel went away sadly, while in gay unworldliness Philip got rid of everything, fortune and even books, and followed JESUS: for he was to be found perpetually wherever there was Exposition. And this devotion to Exposition is again distinctly Florentine.

There, for instance, instead of senselessly inundating the house of mourning with wreaths, the relatives obtain leave for Exposition, to which they request friends and the faithful to come and pray for the Departed Soul.

Our St. Philip plays a singular and exceptional part—is alone, I think, among the Saints in having, while still a layman, presided at Expositions, and even preached in that Divine Presence. His devotion must have been fully recognized as something extraordinary, else he never would have been permitted without interference or remonstrance to act in so strangely prominent and unusual a manner. It takes us back in thought to the Early Christians he

loved and imitated, who were so lovingly familiar with the Most Holy Eucharist.

But it is when he is made priest that his love of the Most Holy bursts forth irrepressibly. Instead of making the customary preparation for Mass, he has to distract himself, else the very approach of the hour throws him into raptures and ecstasies. In the sacristy it is a distinct sweetness even to handle the chalice. At the altar his features are lit with miraculous light; to give Communion to others is " a joy beyond control "; he trembles violently, and his hand that holds the Sacred Host shakes through the vehemence of his tender emotion. Saying Mass in public becomes intolerable to his devotion, for he longs to linger, and dreads having to finish, and yet always is quick rather than slow, for the sake of those who assist. It becomes still more intolerable to his humility, for he cannot hide the exultation of his heart and flesh which lifts him bodily from the *predella*, and keeps him poised in the air, sustained by the heats of his heart, a living furnace of ardent love. It ended in the Sovereign Pontiff's sending him, unasked, permission to say Mass in a private oratory arranged for him close to his rooms at Vallicella. There, unchecked and unrestrained, he celebrated according to the rubrics of his own devotion. And

we are told that, so soon as by the words of Consecration he had brought the Living Bread down from Heaven, his server lit a little lamp, hung up a notice outside the chapel door, "Silence, the Father is saying Mass," and went quietly away. Unseen of human eye, unheard by ear of man, for two hours and often longer St. Philip stood at that altar, or was raised in the air before it, and his heart and soul and mind and strength were all fixed and concentrated upon the Body and Blood of the Lamb of God.

Deepest silence has been observed as to what passed between Our Lord and His servant; no account has been given of those mysterious interviews, no record has been found of what Philip thought or felt. It was for himself alone, his especially peculiar privilege, and we are not told that he ever spoke with any on the subject. It may be gathered from the circumstance of the notice fixed by the server of those Masses, and from its wording, that Philip would avoid all allusion to the matter, and treat it as "The Secret of the King." But the very depth of his silence gives strong reason for suspecting that favours innumerable, Divine condescensions, and familiarities beyond our power of conception, took place between the sweet Saviour thus detained

a willing Captive in that chapel cell by the fearlessness of the dear old Saint, who contrived in this manner somewhat to satisfy his perfect love of JESUS CHRIST. I know of no other who has had the permission to celebrate Holy Mass in this ecstatic, trance-like way. What a lesson of love for us his children! The man most thought of, most sought after, most wanted in Rome by everyone, by the Pope, by Cardinals, by the laity of every condition, by his own Congregation of priests, hiding himself, shutting himself in for hours every day to say Mass and to be with JESUS in the Blessed Sacrament! May we all in the School of St. Philip study this most beautiful lesson of love, feeling with St. Philip, saying with St. Peter: "Lord, it is good for us to be here!"

We must not forget that illness never separated Philip from his Beloved. When prevented from saying Mass, he received Holy Communion daily, in his old age as in his youth. The last time he communicated in this manner was a fortnight before his death, on May 12. In the morning he was dying, and Baronius was unable to do more than administer Extreme Unction; but later in the day Cardinal Frederic Borromeo, who was called "Father Philip's soul," had the consolation of giving Holy Viaticum to the Saint whom

he dearly loved, and listening to the burning words of welcome with which Philip greeted the Sacred Host. It was as though Our Lord would have this outpouring take place as a profession of love such as He procured from the Head of the Apostles. The Cardinal, bearing the Most Holy, entered the sick-room. With a loud voice and streaming eyes the Saint cried out: "Behold my Love, behold my Love: behold Him who is all my Love and all my Good: Give me my Love quickly!" He repeated the *Domine, non sum dignus*, as though nothing ailed him, saying: "No, Lord! I am not worthy, and I never was worthy, for I have never done a single good thing." Thus protesting and weeping he again called out: "Come, Lord, come to me; come, O my Love," and in a transport of fervour received the Blessed Sacrament. With sweet content, he again exclaimed: "Now I have received the true Physician of my soul. *Vanitas vanitatum, et omnia vanitas;* he who wishes for aught else than Christ knows not what he seeks or what he wishes." And then, making his thanksgiving, he was "Silent in his love."[1]

[1] Since this was written, I have read that the late Cardinal Rampolla, of holy memory, imitated our Saint in devoutly prolonging, to satisfy his devotion, the daily Masses, which he celebrated piously in his private oratory.

May we not dare to think that it was for our instruction these unexpected, unusual words came out of the abundance of the heart where dwelt the Holy Ghost ? Day after day St. Philip was able to say Mass, even on the last day of life—the Feast of Corpus Christi; but all that he so sweetly said when he received Holy Viaticum was the last attempt, by word and example, to induce us all to " taste and see that the Lord is sweet."

# PART IV

## EUCHARISTIC MEDITATIONS AND ASPIRATIONS ON PSALM XLI

1. AS THE HART PANTETH AFTER THE FOUNTAINS OF WATER; SO PANTETH MY SOUL AFTER THEE, O GOD.
2. THESE THINGS I REMEMBERED, AND POURED OUT MY SOUL IN ME.
3. WITH THE VOICE OF JOY AND PRAISE.

# EUCHARISTIC MEDITATIONS AND ASPIRATIONS ON PSALM XLI.

## The Blessed Sacrament and the Forty-First Psalm.

As the hart panteth after the fountains of water; so my soul panteth after Thee, O God.

My soul hath thirsted after the strong living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God ?

My tears have been my bread day and night, whilst it was said to me daily : Where is thy God ?

In these words David not only sang the praises of God, he also spoke as a prophet, and, inspired by the Holy Ghost used this language of love and longing which in after ages was to be repeated in the Office of the Church during the celebration of the Solemn Feast of Corpus Christi. Every day during this glorious Octave we repeat these words: and we may well believe that they will assist our devotion and yield us abundant matter for meditation.

An unsatisfied desire leaves no peace to the heart. It is importunate, perpetually on the alert; it asks, beseeches, now pleadingly, now almost angrily; its discontent deepens, and the

first cry of joy is when the heart yields consent and on the impulse of the desire begins to strive for the beloved object. Now, the one strong, vehement desire of the human heart is the Desire of God. God is the Supreme Object of human supernatural love and affection. Towards Him tend our highest aspirations. We may be scarcely conscious what it is that we desire. Our heart wants something, it scarce knows what; loves someone, it scarce knows whom. The mistakes of this ignorance intensify suffering instead of allaying the craving. Worse misery, we often with culpable intent endeavour to deceive and cheat the heart by substituting false goods for the True and Supreme Good, by offering vain joys and satisfactions which cost nature no effort to find, for they abound. We may succeed in persuading the heart that in some earthly object is treasured all the happiness of which it dreamed, all the bliss for which it hoped. With delusions, shadows, unrealities, we amuse and entice the heart, silencing its scruples and suspicions. But not for long: it perceives the trick, it discovers the fraud, tastes the bitterness of poison, and laments anew. Where is my God ? it exclaims. Where is my God ? For Thee, O Lord, were we made, and until they rest in Thee our hearts can have no rest !

This is easily understood. From God we all come, and to Him we must all return. An instinct has been implanted in the soul, a whispered obedience has been laid on every soul in the moment of creation, a law has been graven on every heart in the hour of birth: and the instinct is irresistible, the obedience urges, and the law speaks aloud, and every heart and soul—"enlightened by the Light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world"—desires, and cannot but desire God. Can the heir to a kingdom be content with a cottage? Not when the kingdom is Heaven. Can the royal heir-apparent divest himself of all noble and high-born sentiments, and forget his birth and dignity? Yet, if he can, the soul born of God cannot forget its divine descent. Earth will satisfy none of us for long, because we are made for Heaven.

In proportion to our consciousness of this high destiny and vocation, according to the distinctness with which we learn and realize that He who is Alpha is also Omega—the End as well as the Beginning—so does the Desire increase; impatience betrays itself, we fret to be kept waiting, we moan: "Woe unto me that my sojourning is prolonged!" But, let us look at the real cause of our unhappiness, let us see more of this Desire of God; and then perhaps

we shall be resigned to bear the pain, for sake of the sweet love of God which it betokens.

For, is it not after all consoling proof that we do love God? He is absent, and we are sad; *Quare tristis es anima mea?* He is invisible, we long to see Him: He is our Last End, we reproach the slow-footed hours, we murmur at the lagging breezes that leave us floating idly in the land-locked bay, when we would be speeding, through storm and tempest, across life's troubled sea towards the eternal shore. Life is short, but too long, far too long for this Desire! The day is spent, but still night seems never coming! Woe to us who are in exile, and "desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ"! And why?—"Because with Thee is the Fountain of life, and in Thy light we shall see light" (Ps. xxxv. 9).

The Fountain of Life—it is for this that we thirst! Beyond the regions of space, in silence that the sounds of time shall never reach, amid the inaccessible mountains and the eternal hills, utterly, infinitely remote from things material and fleshly, supremely and gloriously unsearchable, unattainable, impregnably fortified and defended by the sheer blissful security of its own imperceptibility, safe from the approach of evil, admitting only those provided with the Wedding Garment into

Divine Simplicity, which knows neither division nor admixture—the Fountain of Life, the Source of Being, the Spring of Grace, the Torrent of Delight hath been, is, and shall be ever! O Fountain! O Triune God! O Blessed Trinity! Into Thy unfathomable depths, O Father Eternal! shall all salvation plunge, nor, though sinking will they be nearer Thy unbeginning Beginning than when they passed from earth's desert of wanderings into the Promised Land of Heaven. In Thy healing waters, O Light of light! we shall bathe our blinded eyes, and we shall see Thee, Image of the Unseen Father, whom in Thee we shall then behold. But, though for ever and ever we bend over Thee, Thou Ocean of Beauty! we shall never discover one half of Thy Infinite Loveliness, equally adorable and entrancing in its smallest drop and its boundless immensity; yet shall it be our joy of joys to gaze upon Thee, ever contemplating never comprehending Thee, Image of the Father, Light and Beauty of the Godhead! With water and with Thee, O Holy Ghost, were we baptized—and we thirst again! But we look to drink of Living Water—Water that will meet our lips when we reach the crystal Fountain—Water that will fill our souls with Thee—Water that will be Thy very Self who wilt bear us away across the Ocean of Beauty

to learn its limitless expanse, who wilt draw us down into its clear, transparent depths that we may prove its inexhaustible abundance, who art given here as the cup of cold water to the wayfarer, but hereafter wilt be given " without measure " as our Eternal Reward. O Fount of Life ! O Triune God ! O Blessed Trinity !

For such a Fountain who would not thirst ? And to declare the thirst, what words could be more faithfully descriptive than those of the Psalmist: " As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so panteth my soul for Thee, my God ?" A true image of life is this, with its thirst, its dangers, its length. During the day the deer must lurk and hide—feeding in the secret glades of the leafy forest, shunning the open plain and the mountain-side where it may be seen and pursued. The hot sun reaches it even in the forest, and it pants with heat and thirst: but it knows the appointed hour; instinct bids it stay concealed, and bear as best it can the want of water till evening falls, and the pathways to the river-side grow shadowy and dim. Then it may leave the lurking-place, warily make its way to the water, stand silently and drink, gaze admiringly perchance upon the reflection of those proudly-branching antlers—and then it must away, gliding unseen, unheard amidst the mighty forest trees. All the day

long it thirsted, at evening only could it drink. Was not the going down of the sun looked for? Were not the shifting shadows of the tree-trunks watched in their circling sweep? Did not the hart rise, and stamp, and then lie down again, almost moaning for the day to be done? And thus it is with us. Life is one long, hot day. We pass it mistrustfully; and fearful are its dangers. Many are its trials, its privations: but, worst of all, its thirst—for God, whom we find not in field or forest—for God, whom we find not in family or friends—for God, whom we desire with ardent longing. All waiting is wearisome: but waiting for God is worst weariness of all. And we must wait. We may feel a freshness in the air, wafted fitfully from the Fountain: but it is afar off, and the momentary relief makes us more earnest, more eager, more athirst. "Woe unto me that my sojourning is prolonged!" "The expectation of the creature waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God. . . . For we know that every creature groaneth and travaileth in pain even till now. And not only it, but ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God, the redemption of our body" (Rom. viii. 19). Yes, in waiting and expectation must our day be spent, in bearing its heat

from morn till noon, from noon till even-tide, when the lengthening shadows steal forth, and the Angels of death beckon, and the night " in which no man can work " brings shade, security, the appointed hour to drink the cool draught of Living Water which shall quench all thirst, all longing, and give God's " Loved Ones sleep." Welcome, beautiful evening of life, welcome long-looked-for Death ! Now is the painful aching desire of the tedious day changed into the soothing peace of that healing darkness in which we pass away to Him who also waits, whose locks are " wet with the dews of night " !—the Divine Lover of the Bride-souls He bears away to eternal rest and perpetual light.

But, let the deer be disturbed, let the hart be hunted, let it be driven by hunters from place to place, tracked by them through the forest fastnesses, and pressed up the steep mountain-side—how it will sob, as it flees despairingly, for the fountains of water ! How with dying eye it will search for the stream into which it may plunge and still the throbbings of its heart and, if not escape, yet turn for a fearless struggle and the final effort for which it is refreshed ! By the keen pursuit of relentless foes it is driven to take refuge in the pools of the mountain stream. Again a true picture of our soul's distress. Spiritual enemies are nigh; tempta-

tions beset us, we must flee. The alarm is given: "Flee away, O my Beloved, and be like to the roe and to the young hart upon the mountains!" To and fro all the day long are we driven and hunted. We long for death: we pant for the Strong, Living God; we implore His aid; we sigh for the deliverance of dissolution. Surrounded and hemmed in by foes, shuddering with pain and anguish, weak and exhausted—how can we break through the cruel assailants that encompass us and compel a final stand? O Thou, who hast given the high hills for refuge to the hunted hart, to us Thou Thyself art Refuge and strength. Mount Calvary is close. We hear Thy SITIO. Thou also dost feel the parching death-thirst? Sanctuary is gained. The soul's desire is granted "To die together and to live together"—Lord JESUS, receive my soul!

## II.

### THE BLESSED SACRAMENT AND THE FORTY-FIRST PSALM.

These things I remembered, and poured out my soul in me: for I shall go over into the place of the wonderful Tabernacle, even to the House of God.

The love that must wait—that, because of the delay in its Lord's coming, has to pass the

days in deeds of mercy and the nights in watchings and canticles of praise and desire—such a love will sustain and encourage itself with the memories of the past. Mercies and favours shown to the Fathers may be hoped for by their children. Many things would the meditative soul of David call to mind, and make him melt into tender devotion and promise himself that he too would " go over to the place of the wonderful Tabernacle, even to the House of God." Death, he well knew, would end the longings of desire, and the patient anguish of a life-long thirst: but in the past relief had sometimes come before death's release, and memory recalled many such miracles of mercy vouchsafed to those who had longed as he was longing; and doubtless he refreshed his fainting soul with the thought of those " ancient mercies." We will try to do the same; with the present we are dissatisfied, of the future we are uncertain: but the records of the past and the promises then made encourage joyful expectation and consolation.

The higher and nobler is the object of love's choice, the more diffident and hopeless the lowly heart must feel. Timid fear must surely mingle with the beginning of this holy and delightful filial love which responds in grateful obedience to the Divine command, Thou shalt

love the Lord Thy God. But surely almost despair must take possession of a heart when it first discovers that it has soared to the very Highest, and set its love upon the Infinitely Great God! Shall we ever dare to tell it? And if we speak, if we hide our faces in confusion like Peter's, and whisper Peter's words, "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee," how will He receive the confession? Will He listen to language seemingly so presumptuous, so unsuitable, so unbecoming in creatures of unutterable insignificance? He is eternal, we momentary—He dwells in light inaccessible, we in darkness and the shadowy vale of death,—He is Immortal, we die daily—He is ineffably blissful, we are sorrowful exiles—He is All-holy, we are so full of sin. Can love and desire on our part be anything but the impossible, to be imposed on none? Enough, enough! All this might have been true: but it is not true, never was true. It is not impossible, it is not even difficult. The Holy Ghost Himself has spoken, and has said: "This commandment that I command thee this day is not above thee, nor far off from thee: Nor is it in Heaven, that thou shouldst say: Which of us can go up to Heaven to bring it unto us, and we may hear and fulfil it in work? Nor is it beyond the sea; that thou mayest excuse thyself, and

say: Which of us can cross the sea, and bring it unto us; that we may hear, and do that which is commanded? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it" (Deut. xxx. 11-14).

These are the words of God who created us, who gave us our longings. He pronounced all things He made to be good. With His blessing He sanctions and stimulates this desire of our heart, and His commandment is accompanied with aid to its fulfilment. He that places in the sandy desert springs of water for the wild creatures who roam there—He who forgets not the very nestling, and hears the call of the callow young ones of the raven—He who makes the earth yield fruit and food for all our bodily needs—He hath regard to the hunger and thirst of human souls, and will satisfy their desire, though He give—Himself! Beautifully has He imparted to creation, in measure and degree, and according to individual capacities, certain resemblances to Himself. The heavens declare His Glory—the mountains His Eternity—the seas His shoreless Immensity—and man has been made by Him with careful design according to His own Image and Likeness. And in the noblest part of man, his heart, can we not discover that created thing which is most like unto the supremest, noblest Attribute of

God, His supereminent Love and Goodness? "I have loved Thee with everlasting love," thus does the Eternal address each human heart. Ah, then, this our love and desire is Divine in origin, it dwells in our heart of flesh, and there faintly represents that eternal Love which dwells in the Heart of God. Let us not be dismayed by the brightness, the splendour, the Majesty of our God! Let us not fear these innumerable Divine Attributes which beset and hem us in. We are the children of His Love, and the Commandment laid upon us is that we love Him; then, amid the thunders of Heaven, and the intolerable, flashing fires which play around the throne, we may advance, and fearlessly fling ourselves into the bosom of that Love! But this will be after death. Before then, what shall we do, and what will He do? What He has done before, that He will repeat, for the Eternal changes not—JESUS CHRIST, yesterday, to-day, and the Same for ever. But we? That which we have never yet done as we could wish—that we will pray to do, and strive to learn how to love Him in return with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength. So that it may be no longer demanded of our weeping soul: Where is Thy God?

"When shall I come, and appear before the face of God?" Will it be with me, as it was

with my father Adam ? Will the Lord come, as He came to Paradise and walked familiarly with His eldest son at the evening hour amid the trees and flowers of the Garden of delights ? Wonderful was the love that gladdened the first days of that unsaddened creature—wonderful the love that drew the curtains of darkness around his trusting sleep, but most wonderful the love that brought the Lord God forth to seek for the society and companionship of His creature ! Can our love help desiring Him, when His Love so desires us ? What a memory was this for David, the man after God's own Heart !

The ages pass on, and the fortunes of man are fallen low. His God would come to him in Paradise, but will He follow His disgraced favourite out where the thorns and thistles grow ? Will God seek sinful man in the forlorn places where he hides rather than lives ? But is the creature lost ? Yes, miserably. Is the creature fallen ? Yes, fearfully, terribly. Oh, what an evil is that worst of evils—that only evil—Sin. Look at man's Fatherland, and at his place of banishment—at that starry house of God above, so far away that the very light, swift as it is, takes ages in coming thence and reaching us—Thence did one sin make Satan fall like lightning into hell. One sin

caused Adam's ruin, and brought a curse on the earth God blessed at first. Will his Creator seek him in such a spot? Will those evening meetings and walks ever be renewed? Who is it that lifts the curtains of Abram's tent, and leads him forth beneath the star-lit sky? Who bids him look up from the Vale of Mambre, and count, if he can, the countless stars? Who is it that leans on the ladder reaching from Haran to Heaven, and speaks with the sleeping Jacob? The Patriarch calls that place, which he marks with an altar-stone, the House of God: for He that spoke is God. Also let Moses say with whom it was he conversed upon Mount Sinai—who treated him, when he went into the tabernacle, "as a man treats with his friend"—whose hand was held over him in the hollow of the rock, when he saw the Invisible. Let the Prophets who saw visions in the night, who heard in its silences those scarce-breathed whisperings—let the child Samuel also—say whether the Lord failed to visit His People. Wonderful were the tabernacles, wonderful the houses made homes for men's hearts, sanctuaries for their souls, because the Lord had come to those places and spoken with His servants, as first He spoke to Adam. Even man's Fall checked not Eternal Love, nor put an end to the visits of his Creator. Paradise was shut,

but God chose other places, even at last the Garden of Gethsemane, though there, alas! He could persuade none "to watch one hour with Him"! "These things I remember," exclaimed David, and he exulted. We Christians can go farther. "the least in the kingdom of Heaven" can say more. The *Ave Maria* in the mouths of Christian babes perfects the praise of the Psalmist: "Blessed be JESUS in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar" resounds before Tabernacles still more wonderful than that of which David sang.

True love is generous; it never says, Enough. It speaks slightingly of the services it has rendered: in the very act of making a present, it promises better gifts. Human love has caught this characteristic, borrowed this beauty from Love that is Divine. "God at sundry times, and in divers manners, spoke in times to the fathers by the Prophets:" but He discoursed not of the benefits He already had bestowed. As though He wanted to escape being thanked, as though He tried to do each act of mercy unobserved, He revealed to them His purposes in the future: "I will come; I—I Myself will come." Thus spoke He, as though He were not already there! As though those visits, made by stealth, in the darkness of the night, in lonely

places and to a few, scarcely deserved the name of visit: He held out hopes to them of a Coming that all flesh would witness: He promised to live here a life of toil—" In labours from My youth ": He foretold an entry into Jerusalem, as her meek and lowly King: He spoke of treason and betrayal, of buffetings and stripes, of sufferings and death upon the Cross. In the fulness of time those promises were more than kept. The Virgin conceived; the Babe was born in the prophesied Stable and laid in the Manger between the two animals; He lived and dwelt among us; and for our sakes, though by our hands, He died. All things concerning Him spoken of by the Prophets—even to His tasting of the vinegar—were faithfully fulfilled. Ye men of Galilee, ye disciples of John, ye Pharisees and Publicans, ye Magdalens, ye little children, ye need no longer meditate and sing the mercies shown to the fathers. Behold, the least amongst you has greater mercy here to call his own! He who stands unnoticed in the midst of you has loved you with an everlasting Love, though you know the very day on which His Heart began to beat. He, who looks upon you so lovingly, has watched you from eternity, though She is there beside Him, on whom not many years back those tender Eyes of His fixed their first gaze. He

has healed so many, has fed so many in the desert, that you love Him, and want to make Him King. If He trusts you not, it is because He knows you better than you know yourselves.

JESUS has fed them in the desert, and has awakened some gratitude and love in hard, cold hearts. He is not displeased with their purpose of making Him King; so far as it testifies their gratitude, it is laudable enough, though He quietly and gently defeats it. But He takes advantage of their change of disposition, and draws away their attention from what He has done in their behalf. He tells them of a further favour, of a greater Gift, of Something they have yet to receive; and He speaks of it as their own already, something promised and foreshadowed long before, to which they were considered entitled. But many of them, alas ! refuse to believe that He has the power to perform the promise He now makes. They love Him at this moment. Though they would not join the Angels' *Gloria* at Bethlehem, they are ready to sing *Hosanna* now. And this, their love, though all imperfect, seems to move His Sacred Heart, and bring unwonted joy into His holy and beautiful though sorrowful Face. For they do not ask Him to depart from their territory—rather, in

the hope to keep Him, they propose to make Him their King. His thought, His wish, is the same, only unimaginably more loving, incomprehensibly more benevolent than anything for which they hope. Long has He resolved it in His Heart; amongst His eternal ideas, it is *the* one of His predilections: yet He has had to wait, to prepare the way, to watch for an opportunity, to dispose them to listen favourably—to what? to the confession and avowal of an endless Love! Strange, indeed, must be the state of creation, when its own Creator must step warily, must guard His words, and, after all, meet with a most chilling and hostile reception from the multitude which just before was ready to crown Him, and now, after hearing Him, decides to walk with Him no more! Yet, how He pleads! How gently He remonstrates! What inducements He puts before them to make them accept His Gift! They understand Him. They say: "How can this man give us His Flesh to eat?" Their strange, churlish ingratitude, their murmured disbelief, do not deter Him; and never was boon so earnestly, so persuasively pressed upon mankind as was this greatest Gift of God. Had He required their permission to do that of which He spoke, He could hardly have been more humble in expostulation. But again His own

received Him not: even of His disciples many went away and walked with Him no more. He sorrowfully watched them leave, and then He made a last appeal, and this time not in vain. But oh, how humbly, how plaintively He implored His chosen Twelve to be faithful! "Will you also leave Me?" Simon Peter answered Him: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and have known that Thou art Christ the Son of God." Happy Twelve! whose love believed and knew the truth of these words of eternal life and love, who accepted, in the name of all the Church, this promised Gift of the Mystery of Faith, this Sacrament of Love. They were honoured with the first invitations to the Heavenly Banquet, they were the first to taste the Sacramental sweetness of the Lord, to eat His Body and drink His Blood! These things we must remember, and ponder on the marvellous manifestation of the meekness and gentleness of JESUS. Meekness and gentleness in the Creator urging His Infinite Love upon His suspicious, stubborn creatures! More than any miracle of the past, better than any recorded words, more unmistakably and evidently than the Three-and-Thirty Years taken as a whole or in detail—this Mystery of the Body and Blood of JESUS

CHRIST permits, approves, excites, and stimulates, nay, compels the heart's desire of God, its thirst for the Fountains of the Saviour. How generously JESUS loved during His mortal life! What deeds of mercy! He made the blind to see, the lame to walk, He forgave sins, He fed multitudes, but He counted it all as nothing. He would not have it spoken of, but bade them hope for a still greater benefit and Gift which He was about to bestow. How patiently, too, did He love! expostulating so gently with them, reminding them of their thirst and hunger, of inevitable death, and thus trying to press His Divine favour upon them. His own interests, His own Dignity and Majesty He seemed to disregard, and to think only of the welfare of those He loved.

What favour done to the Patriarchs can for one instant compare with this? Redemption and Atonement lead up to this more wonderful Mystery. Love and Justice led JESUS to the Cross; Love alone leads Him to the Altar and the Tabernacle. What allured Him into these miraculous meshes, these Sacramental Accidents that detain Him as their Captive? The gift of our heart, the gaining of our love—little though that love be—brought Him; but it is not enough to account for His Presence and perpetual residence amongst us. It is His own

great Love, the eternal and infinite desire of His Sacred Heart, that drives and impels Him to " the place of the wonderful Tabernacle."

Millions of stars lighted the midnight interview of Abraham with the Lord—one little sanctuary lamp twinkles during ours ! More fittingly than David we may say: " These things I remembered, and poured out my soul in me; for I shall go into the place of the wonderful Tabernacle, even to the House of God."

## III.

### The Blessed Sacrament and the Forty-First Psalm.

With the voice of joy and praise; the noise of one feasting.—Ps. xli.

Love and life are tenants of the heart. Love is dislodged by sin, life by death. Love and sin are irreconcilable enemies, and so are life and death. But between love and death there is no enmity. Love is " stronger than death," and death cannot destroy it. Death can cause pain, can compass love with darkest sorrows and anguish, but not always, not necessarily in hostility. Since the Fall of man, since the death of Abel, love has made room in the heart for suffering and sorrow, has heard the footstep of death draw nigh, and felt no great antipathy and fear. Men may not then have understood *how* there could be this friendship, what

was the secret sympathy, but it was recognized and felt; one has even said to corruption, "Thou art my mother," has called the worms of the grave his "sisters." Since Calvary, the darkness of the mystery has withdrawn with all other shadows, the truth has beamed forth, and the earthly relationship of love and pain is established by the consummation of the Infinite Sacrifice of the Cross. Earthly love, the holiest and purest, even that of Mary, has ever suffered, and must suffer to the end. Divine Love upon earth suffered most of all. Even now, this law is neither repealed nor relaxed; and those who are still in the body of this death must expect pain and sorrow to be mingled with their love.

The life of love is union. This is true of all love, human and Divine, of the loves commanded by the First and Second Commandments, for the two loves are in truth but one. The separation of two hearts that love causes sufferings far more intense than those of physical pain. Think what it is when death parts them! One is gone, the other is left alone, in the land of Egypt, in the house of bondage and mourning. Death severed them with one stroke. It was the last pain he could inflict on the heart that is gone, for it gained forthwith its liberty; it is now in the Land of the Living, in joy and peace, and its tears are wiped

away for ever. Not so is it with the one left behind: earth still exercises jurisdiction over that faithful heart. There is no destruction in the love of either: the one loves and rejoices, the other loves and mourns, as the dove pining to rejoin its missing mate.

And how otherwise can we speak of Divine Love? This also lives in union. Everlasting union with God is Heaven, is eternal life. Separation from God is suffering: but if—may God avert it!—we are hopelessly parted from Him, it is the destruction of love, we are of the Lost, of the eternally "dead from the heart." The Beatific Vision, the light of glory, the Eternal Rest put us in possession of our happiness by enabling us to be for ever united in ecstatic fruition to our Life, our Love, our Strong, Living God. They adorn the soul with her bridal robe and jewels: for He who is Eternal Love has espoused her to Himself. Heaven is the endless Bridal Supper of the Lamb, celebrated amid angelic raptures "with the voice of joy and praise, the sound of one feasting."

That Marriage Feast is begun. The "friends of the Bridegroom are assembled." Why tarries the Bride? *Omnes quidem dormitaverunt.* How can the virgin sleep? How is it that her heart is not weary, and sad, and

wakeful, waiting for His coming? She sleeps, but her heart watches. She sleeps, but with the restless slumber of sorrow, as slept the Apostles in the Garden of Agony. The little human heart is here upon the earth, repining at the delay, dying with desire, and wondering why He lingers. To this love, then, death is no enemy but a friend. "I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ." A longing for Heaven, a desire to live with God for ever in unbroken happiness and bliss is what the *Cupio* of St. Paul means, what many another is eager for, though it seems to be only a sighing for death.

And must we then wait for Heaven? Shall we not see Him sooner, possess Him earlier, induce Him even here "to stay with us" awhile? How we suffer by being thus "absent from the Lord!" Yes, but we must not forget that, being on this earth, this place of penance, all things, even our very love for God, must wear the look of sacrifice and expiation. This is a Divine decree. *We* can see no way of evading it: but the Maker of the law is wiser, more loving too, than we, and in our favour has defeated His own decrees, or abrogated the penal part, sweetly and effectually imparting to us the bliss of union with our God in the Mystery of Faith, in Holy Com-

munion! The Holy Eucharist is anticipation of Heaven, and this explains our heart's hunger and thirst for this Heavenly Food.

It is given to us as Bread from Heaven, it is given to us as the Bread of Life. And a promise of Heaven accompanies the Gift. We know why this promise is made at such a time. As usual, as if to disparage His present Goodness, Our Lord speaks of a future, and a more abiding, though not a greater, Gift. But we, dearest Lord, have detected the device of Thy Humility and Thy Love. We have traced it in all Thy gracious dealings with us from the beginning until now: and we shall not "tell no man," nor spare Thee praise and thanks for Thy generosity. We will, while receiving Thy Gift, think of Heaven also, yet only that we may realize the more that with Thee in our hearts sacramentally we are in Heaven—that we may say to Thee with St. Peter: "Lord, it is good to be here. Let us build three Tabernacles!" The first Tabernacle, that of the Altar; the second Tabernacle, our heart holding Thee; the third Tabernacle, of God with men, that Heaven whence Thou, O Living Bread! art come.

JESUS upon the altar, in the Sacrifice of the Mass, is the slain Lamb, the mystically Dead Victim. JESUS in the Communicant's heart,

and in the Tabernacle is the Risen JESUS, and His glorified Flesh is the Life of the world. As a quickening spirit He takes possession of the soul, infusing more abundant life, more ardent love. How truly each Communicant may say with St. Paul: "I live, now not I, but Christ lives in me!" Life is the very result of His Presence in Heaven: and Life is the very result of His Sacramental Presence in the Church. It is because He is with her "all days, even to the consummation of the world," that she has already put on immortality, that her words are living words, her actions vigorous, efficacious actions, her truths living, energetic truths, her Sacraments Fountains of the Saviour, Sources of Salvation. But for His Presence, she would have, as human institutions have, only a History to preserve. And even this, without His Presence, she could scarcely have accomplished. How faint would be the memory of the Passion, except for Holy Mass in which that Passion is commemorated, as was enjoined by JESUS! But in the Blessed Sacrament is the Living JESUS, who makes the Church live by His own Life. In that Life each individual lives and thrives, according to the measure of grace, JESUS disdaining none. If any man love Him, it is enough: He will come and make His abode with him. Yet it is distinctly His own Love

that first suggests, and prompts this entrance into each longing heart. He comes full of life, of energy, of keenest interest and sympathy. He rivals the future closeness of our union with Him in Heaven by the closeness of that which He here effects. Body and soul we are possessed by Him. It is as though His Glorified Flesh so quickens ours that we cannot but say with the Psalmist: "My heart and flesh rejoice and exult in the Living God." It is as if the Precious Blood mingles with ours, and for a while flows in the same veins. It is as if our soul in spiritual contact touches, and is touched by, the Soul of Christ. Nay, we not only tremblingly adore the Body, and Blood, and Soul of Christ, but His Father and the Holy Ghost as well, whom we must entertain as Divine Guests, whenever our heart is fed in Communion by Himself, our Incarnate Love. It is as He promised—"If any man love Me, My Father will love him, and We will come to him." He gives us all, as all is given in Heaven—Body, Soul, and Godhead.

Death is a Divine punishment, and is, and to the end will be, inflicted upon all by the justice of God. "It is appointed unto all men to die." How, then, shall the voice of praise resound in this gloomy valley of death? We can rejoice, and give praise, because death is

no longer victorious, his terrors are taken from him, he is the captive of his Conqueror, and brings to God's loved ones rest in the Lord, sleep in JESUS. For, JESUS is our Resurrection and our Life—our life in very truth: because He becomes the Viaticum of the dying, not only to help them in that hour, and to keep their frightened souls comforted and safe in His gentle grasp, but also to dedicate and seal the body, doomed to dust and decay, yet dear to Him in its old identity and aspect, for the sake of that poor, weak, wayward heart that really did love Him ere it grew cold and stopped. He is the Resurrection of the body, and He consecrates the body by this last Sacramental Visit. The Bread of Life strengthens the dying heart, and is the Pledge that the same JESUS will "raise him up in the last day."

The Blessed Sacrament is, then, living and life-giving. Silent, and as though asleep, JESUS is brought to us by the careful priest, and, as Mary would have given the Babe into our own arms, is given into our very hearts. And, as though the change awoke Him, He smiles with joy and delight upon the soul whose Willing Prisoner He is. Oh, doubt not this. He lives, He really lives and loves. Life and Love stream from His Sacred Flesh and Blood, and feed and nourish the soul as truly and

tenderly as the mother's milk supports her little one. Even the Sacred Species which conceal Him probably themselves give out, as did His garments, health and healing. Is it not to convince us of the reality of His Life in the Blessed Sacrament that He has deigned to make a further revelation, and has there shown us His Sacred Heart ?

Was it not because of our coldness, our unconcern, our treatment of this Mystery as a means of grace rather than the Author Himself of Grace—was it not to change these hearts of ours, that He revealed to us His own ? That burning, sensitive Heart, which in sweetest self-abandonment shrank not from being laid within ours, was wounded by our demeanour, by our stiff, reserved, respectful reception, so different to what the manner of His own coming ought to have inspired and encouraged. " Give Me thy heart," but filled with that charity which " many waters cannot extinguish." He would be welcomed and loved even as He Himself loves. These frail and snow-like elements veil indeed His fair, white Flesh and the ruddy, Precious Blood, but also resist by miracle the consuming flames of that burning, throbbing Heart, which has never lived except " to cast fire upon the earth."

He has not come to our hearts as to a tomb and sepulchre. Gaze not upon Him as though

He were cold and lifeless: worship and adore, but not as if He were buried within you, and neither heard nor saw you. He is "The Living Bread." When He came of old, in vision only, not personally, not made Flesh as now, how was He received? How entertained? Did they not walk with Him? Did they not converse with Him? Did they not even wrestle with Him the live-long night? Nay, later, when "the Benignity and Charity of God Our Saviour" appeared in our midst, did they not ask Him, "Master, where dwellest Thou?" Did they not watch with Him, and boast that they had done so? It was their happiness, their Heaven by anticipation. And not theirs alone. Sacramentally He comes to us, truly living, distinctly cognizant of our dispositions towards Him. And we, therefore, must receive Him and entertain Him now, as we would have done, had we lived in Galilee or Judea, and He had knocked at our door, and asked to enter our roof and be our Guest!

How favoured are we! God has given the soul this longing for Himself, this heavenly instinct which causes her to turn from all else discontentedly, until she sinks down into blissful rest beneath the shadow of her Beloved. Yet He is Himself the Seeker rather than the sought, the Finder rather than the Found, for only His endless Love could invent this mar-

vellous means of appeasing the hunger and assuaging the thirst of souls wandering wearily in this desert of banishment and woe. He rains down from Heaven this Manna, although few bestir themselves to collect its blessings. His Miracle of Love continues, in spite of our "little faith." We are told that in one region, "JESUS could not do any miracles, because of their incredulity." And now His Mystery of Faith would operate more miracles of love, if only our faith were stronger. It is the Object of our Faith, not of our curiosity: and yet too many allow curiosity to suggest questions in a way that may easily become irreverent. Imagination also intrudes: and then the mind begins to puzzle and perplex itself about the manner of Our Lord's coming: the poor heart still believes, but feebly instead of victoriously: the *Credo* of the Christian sinks into the prayer of one who was not a Christian and yet said, "Lord, I believe, help Thou my unbelief!" Greatly displeasing to Our Lord is all doubt and want of faith. It was almost the only fault amongst their many, for which He blamed His Own and reproached them to the end. Let us strive to make amends by deeper adoration, by increased fervour, by a still louder "Voice of joy and praise."

In the Holy Eucharist JESUS gives Himself to us by way of Food—our soul's Support and

Nourishment, our Meat and Drink, our "Daily Bread." What spiritual health, and vigour, and beauty should be ours! What progress in perfection, and in angelic purity! As the very faces of the Three Children gave evidence of the excellence of the food blessed for them by God, so should there be in us similar signs of the Sacramental efficacy of the Bread of Angels. The face of our father St. Philip was white as death and radiant with sparkling light after his Communions.

In every soul thus God-sustained what changes must take place when JESUS enters as Guest! Sorrows, sickness, poverty—our heart's inmates almost from our birth, find themselves in presence of the joy, the health, the riches that follow in His train.

Formerly instruments of misery, henceforth they become instruments of happiness, means of greater holiness, witnesses of closer union. They are the very friends who procure for us the invitation to the Banquet. All were invited, the gay, the prosperous, the worldly—but they would not come. Then were the poor, the sick, the lame, the blind, called and collected, and are still called, and we among them. Misery is ever attractive to the Merciful God, sorrow to the Sacred Heart, the sinner to the Saviour. And by His Presence, His touch, our wounds are healed, our wants are remedied,

our whole being receives life, health, and happiness. He comes not empty-handed: though so secretly, He comes not unattended. Thousands of ministering spirits gather round the throne of Sacramental Love, whether that throne be the white marble altar, or a living human heart. They are laden with the gifts He destines for us.

In Holy Communion, JESUS not only "fills the hungry with good things," not only delights in adorning souls with "great and precious gifts," but He prepares them for the Espousals of Divine Love. To this end is it that the Bread of Angels confers, in a most especial way, angelical purity of soul. In the Blood of the Lamb our sin-stained robes are washed and made whiter than snow. It is only "amongst lilies" that the Lamb of God will feed. But the soiled and drooping flower, when He draws nigh, instead of being crushed and trampled under foot, is raised and uplifted, meekly to bloom again amongst the unfallen flowers. After a sad Confession, what a strangely-sweet Communion! His pardon has but just preceded Him: and on the heart yet hot with scalding contrition, amidst the great tears that still flow fast, He descends softly as a snowflake, and melts away in Love! Favoured Communicant! He is preparing thee for His highest gift, His most ennobling grace. This purity, this soul-innocence, has been restored

to thee to fit thee for the Mystical Marriage of the Lamb. In convents are Brides of Christ, who are espoused to Him " in justice." They have left all and followed Him. Hereafter, they shall follow the Lamb by right, and sing their Virginal Song. In the world are many who would, but may not, leave all to follow CHRIST. They, too, are His Brides. He is " the Guide of their virginity," and by Holy Communion they are " espoused in mercy," in pity and mercy to their longings, and condescension to their love, in sweet and gracious response to the prayer of their heart. Round the altar, then, kneel thousands who have cast in their lot with CHRIST, who have chosen Him, as did St. Agnes and St. Catherine, to be their only Life and Love, and converse with Him in the Holy Communion as do the contemplatives in convent cells. Saintly souls, unsuspected and unknown, ye will not be always unacknowledged. Now, it is a secret between yourselves and your Saviour: but the day will come when in beautiful bridal wreaths, ye shall take the places kept for you amid the Virgin Saints! Yes, there are many to whom the penance of the life they have to lead in the world is a substitute for the austerity of the religious state, and, instead of the life-long, consecrating vow, the Blessed Sacrament is daily placed as the Seal of Love upon their hearts.

From the child who receives his First Communion to the octogenarian who receives his last, how honoured and happy are the children of the Church fed at the Table of the Lord! Each receives JESUS, God and Man, Living and Life-giving—the fragrance of His Five Wounds makes the soul swoon at His Blessed Feet at one time: at another, their sweetness attracts her, and draws her deep into their depths. As the bee will bury herself in the honey-distilling blossom, so acts the fearless soul, and sometimes, overcome by the fragrance and the sweetness, she will fall into ecstatic slumber, asleep on the Sacred Heart!

One thing is wanting to Holy Communion, one thing alone. We have Him, our Life, our Love, we have Him with His Graces, His Virtues, His Divine Favours, His Wounds, His Sacred Heart—but we cannot keep Him. In vain we say: "Stay with us, it is already evening!" The shades of night are round us, and are deepening, and we have not yet seen His Blessed Face and Features. It must be so, but not for long. The night will pass, the day will dawn: we shall be shown by Mary the Blessed Fruit of her womb: we shall see His Face, and it will then be—HEAVEN.

# PART V

## L'ENVOY

# CANTABO DILECTO MEO

## L'ENVOY

### O SALUTARIS HOSTIA.

O Salutary, Sacred Host !
Who settest wide the gate of Heaven;
Waylaid by foes, lest we be lost,
Dear Lord ! be strength and succour given.

To Thee, O Lord God, Three in One !
Be glory, sempiternal praise !
Who givest when earth's life is done
The Heavenly Life for endless days.

### TANTUM ERGO SACRAMENTUM.

Mighty Sacrament ! Before Thee
Prostrate must our worship be;
Fled are shadows: we adore Thee,
Faith's sublimest Mystery !
When our senses falter o'er Thee,
Faith supplies her remedy.

Praise and honour, jubilation
To the Father and the Son !
Benediction and salvation
To our God upon the throne,
Equal homage, adoration,
Holy Ghost ! to Thee be done !
Amen.

## FLOS CAMPI.

At His bidding, God's great Angels
Scattered Manna, white and sweet,
From the heavens upon His People,
Like the hoar frost at their feet.

At thy bidding, Queen of Angels,
They sent snow-flakes, pure and white,
Tracing out the walls and altar
On thy church's chosen site.

At my bidding,—Greater marvel !
Loveliest " Flower of the Field " !
Thou dost fall from highest Heaven
Subject to the power I wield.

When I lift Thee to the Father,
Fragrant Flower, so fair and white,
Do not let me lose Thee wholly,
Though unworthy of Thy sight.

Beats a heart within this bosom—
Vase-like, 'tis brimful of tears,
Tears of love, and tears of sorrow
For the sins of many years.

Once this heart was hard and arid—
Midst the wicked I was worst;
With its tears shalt Thou be watered,
Never say again: " I thirst " !

At Thy bidding, may Thine Odour—
Fragrance of my life and death—
Fairest, Loveliest of all flowers !
Sanctify my final breath !

## LILIUM CONVALLIUM.

THE fairest flowers of earth grow wild,
For thorn and thistle they atone;
The joy, the prize of poorest child,
They fleck the footstool of God's throne.

In valleys low, on mountains steep,
They spread from field to pathless moor;
Beneath the roadside hedge they creep,
In pity placed there for the poor.

Supreme in beauty on the plains,
With honied calix golden-bright,
The Lily of the Valley reigns,
In petal robe of purest white.

Thou, Lord ! hast pointed out this flower,
Hast called Thyself by its sweet name;
Dear Lord ! It has symbolic power
Thy meekest virtues to proclaim.

In Wayside Shed, on Mary's breast
Thy beauty Thou didst first unfold;
There lowly Shepherds, Magi prest,
Thee with Thy Mother to behold.

On altars now, our Snow-white Host,
With golden Chalice of Thy Blood,
We find Thee, without toil or cost,
Content with our poor gratitude.

While high above, on breast of God
In vernal freshness Thou dost lie—
Scarce separate from Jesse's Rod,
The Lily of Eternity !

## ECCE STO AD OSTIUM.

THE Dweller in the clean of heart
Is asking for a home—
I dare not say unto Him, " Come !"—
I cannot say, " Depart !"

The day is spent, and evening falls;
His head, His sacred locks
Are damp and drenched with dew; He knocks—
He stands, and softly calls.

He whispers: " Open, Sister, Dove,
My Love, My Undefiled !"
She lives not here, that chosen child,
His fair one, and His love.

" Set wide thy door, and do not fear—
He will not turn to go."
I am not worthy, Lord, I know,
That Thou shouldst enter here.

" Not evening dusk, not shades of night
Have made Me miss My way—
With mortals I rejoice to stay,
Yea, this is My delight.

" For thee I left My Father's Breast,
His many mansions bright—
Throughout thy life by day and night,
I ask to be thy Guest.

" To seek the sinner I still come,
With sinners still I eat."
Then, Lord, my place is at Thy feet—
Make, make this heart Thy home !

INVENERUNT MARIAM, ET JOSEPH, ET INFANTEM POSITUM IN PRAESEPIO.

JESUS is in my heart—Archangels, as of old
Ye knelt at Bethlehem, now adore in circling throng !
In helpless want, in bitter cold,
He waits your worship and your song.

Against a frozen world's neglect and scornful slight,
How poor the shelter of a cheerless heart like mine !
How sullen and how black the night
Which frowns on Thee, O Guest Divine !

Mary ! too humble to disdain the lowly cave,
For thy Son's sake do not a wretched heart despise;
Compassionate thy suppliant slave,
And make a stable Paradise.

O lend me thine own heart, thy heart with flames and light—
The roadside shed will seem His Mother's home !
Thy soul to mine for His dear sake unite,
And let me say, Come, JESUS, come !

## AD MATREM DOMINI MEI.

*Ante Communionem.*

THROUGHOUT the land of light,
The blessed clad in white,
  Thy presence, Mary, with the angels seek:
Yet hear a sinner's prayer,
O help me to prepare
  My soul for Him who heals the sick and weak—
I call the Queen of Heaven to earth,
The Mother cannot scorn her Jesu's place of birth.

Unclean of heart and hands,
In spite of His commands
  I dare not eat and drink His Flesh and Blood.
My sinfulness is such
I dare not even touch
  His garment's hem, yet hunger for that Food:
I ought to weep and hold aloof,
How dare I entertain the Lord beneath my roof?

His wounds in hands and feet
The Father's face entreat—
Those roseate wounds the Father's wrath appease:
Show thou the bosom blest
That nursed and gave Him rest—
No need for thee to ask on bended knees,
Thy lightest wish prevails like prayer,
And Jesus at one look the guiltiest will spare.

Thou dost not ask in vain;
Sweet Advocate, obtain
The grace and mercy I so greatly need.
O Mary ! as through thee
He came on earth to me,
By thee, my Mother, I to Him would plead—
Nay, lend to me thine own pure heart,
For fear He find no fruit, and curse me and depart.

Thy faith and hope and love
Once drew Him from above,
Descending lightly as the dewy cloud—
Thou fair and spotless one,
For me unclean atone—
Thou lowly one, win pity for the proud.
I strike my breast, I hide my head,
And think a mother's tears made Jesus raise the dead.

And if I stay away,
What shall I say that day
When He will judge the living and the dead ?
O Blessed Sacrament !
My soul's sweet nourishment,
True life to all who eat Thee, Living Bread !
Unfit to die, unfit to live,
I come to Thee, dear Lord, for Mary's sake forgive !

## AD MATREM DOMINI MEI.

*Post Communionem.*

O MARY ! Virgin blest,
Sweet Mother of my Guest.
Give thanks for me to Jesus, God and Lord;
O bid thine Angels raise
New canticles of praise—
By Heaven and earth be Christ thy Son adored:
To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
Be benediction given, and to the Sacred Host !

Descend, great Queen, descend,
Creation's Empress, bend
Beside earth's vilest to creation's King—

Yes, Mother undefiled,
Assist thy poorest child
To worship Jesus, teach me how to sing
Magnificat like thine—But no !
My undersong of praise be tears and weepings low.

For all that He has done
In thee and every one,
For all His love and patience give Him praise.
Compared to thy blest womb
My heart is but a tomb,
Yet in this heart contentedly He stays—
My heart should feel what thine has felt,
And at His lightest touch in tenderness should melt.

Alas, 'tis hard and cold !
Upon thy heart of gold,
Thy golden glowing heart of burning love,
There—while He is mine own—
I lay thy white Lamb down—
He has no brighter altar-throne above—
There, in the shrine of purity
And lilies silver-white the spotless Lamb shall lie.

His Father dwells in light,
I cannot reach that height,
With mortal eye I may not look and live—
Yet Christ in highest bliss
Accepts His Mother's kiss—
Best thanks a son can take, a mother give—
Then, clasp Him to thy tender breast,
His gentle mercy-seat, His sweetest place of rest.

Behold the Infinite
With nothingness unite!
O Mary, who can measure love divine?
O full of grace! now fill
Mind, memory and will
With light, and gratitude, and love like thine:
So may my heart, like thy pure heart,
Keep blessedly the Word, although the Word depart.

## DOMUS ORATIONIS.

SERAPHIM our God are praising
In His dwelling-place on high,
Where the happy Saints are gazing
On the Blessed Trinity—

Lamb of God ! while they adore Thee
In the land of life and light,
Here, we sinners kneel before Thee,
And find favour in Thy sight.

Lord, the Heart of Mary drew Thee
To Thy Mother full of grace—
That same Heart we offer to Thee,
As Thy home and resting-place.
Yes, dear Lord, Thy habitation
Gratefully we dedicate
To the Ark of Thy salvation,
To the Heart Immaculate.

Bread of Life, sent by the Father
Daily Bread above all price !
Here, true worshippers will gather
For the Holy Sacrifice.
Here, Saint Philip's homely preaching
Will attract us night by night—
Echoes of the Gospel teaching,
Welcome gleams of Gospel light.

Wearied strangers here shall rest them,
Peace they cannot comprehend
Shall be theirs when Thou hast blest them,
Unknown Saviour, Hidden Friend !

Prince of Pastors, grant them pity,
  See, they haunt Thy Mother's shrine!
Have compassion on this city,
  On these other sheep of Thine.

Make of all one congregation—
  Priests and people, rich and poor,
Roman Saint and English nation—
  One in Thee for evermore,
To Thy Mother's Heart confide us,
  From that royal House of Gold,
Good and gentle Shepherd, guide us
  To Thy Father's Heavenly Fold.

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